
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 338 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, BREWSTER, FONTANA, BAKER, WILEY,
ARGALL, DINNIMAN, BROWNE, FARNESE, TEPLITZ, RAFFERTY,
SCHWANK, YUDICHAK, SCAVELLO, WHITE, COSTA, HUTCHINSON,
MENSCH, AUMENT AND BARLOTTA, APRIL 12, 2016

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, APRIL 12, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2016 as "Lyme Disease Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a bacterial infection transmitted
4 primarily by ticks and is caused by the spirochete *Borrelia*
5 *burgdorferi*; and

6 WHEREAS, Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases and
7 disorders, such as babesiosis, Bartonella and ehrlichiosis, pose
8 a serious threat to the quality of life of many Pennsylvanians,
9 with the frequency of diagnosed and reported Lyme disease cases
10 increasing dramatically over the past several years; and

11 WHEREAS, The most recent 15-year surveillance study of the
12 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which was
13 published in 2008, reveals continued emergence and geographic
14 expansion of Lyme disease across the United States; and

15 WHEREAS, The CDC study reports a disproportionate increase
16 among children and recommends a Public Health Action to call for
17 an increase in targeted prevention strategies, tick avoidance,

1 early disease recognition and early treatment interventions; and

2 WHEREAS, In August 2013, the CDC released a report stating
3 that preliminary estimates indicate approximately 300,000
4 Americans are diagnosed with Lyme disease each year, and this
5 amount is approximately 10 times higher than the number of cases
6 previously reported to the CDC every year; and

7 WHEREAS, In the last five years, Pennsylvania ranked highest
8 in the country in the number of confirmed cases of Lyme disease;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, From 2002 to 2014, Pennsylvania reported a total of
11 59,478 confirmed cases of Lyme disease and in 2015 reported
12 10,817 new cases with provisional cases to be confirmed later in
13 2016; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2015, a Department of Environmental Protection
15 published study confirmed a high risk of Lyme disease in every
16 county of this Commonwealth, as 67 counties had the blacklegged
17 tick, verifying that every Pennsylvanian, from Philadelphia to
18 Erie, must take precautions to prevent the spread of Lyme
19 disease; and

20 WHEREAS, The most common way to acquire Lyme and related
21 diseases is to be bitten by a tick that carries the spirochete;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, This disease is not limited to age or ethnic
24 boundaries; and

25 WHEREAS, Lyme disease can cause early symptoms, including a
26 rash or flu-like symptoms such as fever, muscle aches, headaches
27 and fatigue, that can easily be misdiagnosed; and

28 WHEREAS, If not caught early, Lyme disease can lead to
29 chronic debilitating illness that is very difficult to
30 eradicate; and

1 WHEREAS, The prevention of Lyme disease and other tick-borne
2 disorders is difficult; and

3 WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth can greatly reduce
4 their chance of tick pathogen transmission if they take proper
5 caution while engaged in outdoor activities from early spring
6 through late fall, as well as during a warmer winter season, and
7 make frequent tick checks and remove and dispose of ticks
8 promptly and properly; and

9 WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth can greatly reduce
10 the risk of Lyme disease on their properties through landscape,
11 insecticide and other measures that have been found to be
12 effective; and

13 WHEREAS, The schools of this Commonwealth can greatly reduce
14 the risk of Lyme and related diseases among schoolchildren
15 through prevention education and precautions, including
16 instruction to parents regarding steps to take before and after
17 school-related activities, such as field trips and sports; and

18 WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth should be aware of
19 early, disseminated and late/persistent symptoms, and that a
20 negative Lyme test cannot rule out Lyme disease; and

21 WHEREAS, The early clinical diagnosis and appropriate
22 treatment of these tick-borne disorders and diseases can greatly
23 reduce the risks of continued, diverse and chronic symptoms that
24 can affect every system and organ of the human body and often
25 every aspect of a person's life; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of May 2016 as
27 "Lyme Disease Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania in a continued
28 effort to benefit the overall health and quality of life of the
29 residents of this Commonwealth by increasing their awareness of
30 the threat of infected tick bites and the potential seriousness

1 of Lyme disease and other tick-borne disorders.