

In Support Of New York State Legislation A05174/S03478, Which Would Require Health Insurance Companies To Provide Coverage For Long Term Medical Care For Lyme Disease And Other Tick Borne Related Pathogens, And Establish Educational Measures Including A Tick Borne Illness Research, Detection and Education Fund

Referred to: The Health and Personnel Committee (Chairman Aiello and Legislators Belfiglio, Ronk, Parete and Provenzano)

Chairman Terry L. Bernardo, Legislator Robert T. Aiello, and Legislators Bartels, Belfiglio, Briggs, Donaldson, Fabiano, Gerentine, Gregorius, Harris, Lopez, Loughran, Maio, Maloney, John Parete, Richard Parete, Robert Parete, Provenzano, Roberts, Rodriguez, Ronk, Wawro, and Wishnick offer the following:

WHEREAS, tick borne disease is at an epidemic level in Ulster County and New York State; and

WHEREAS, Lyme Disease, Babesiosis, Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis/ Human Monocytic Ehrlichiosis (HGA/HME), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF), and Tularemia are a few of the known infections transmitted by ticks; and

WHEREAS, tick borne disease affects people of every age, gender, and socioeconomic group regardless of where they live in Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, these tick born infections are known to cause a wide range of clinical spectra from mild to severe and in some instances, fatal disease; and

WHEREAS, many people are unaware they have been bitten by a tick and the appearance of a bulls-eye rash and/or a blood test has proven to be an unreliable way to detect these tick born illnesses; and

WHEREAS, the classic features of Lyme disease may be absent, and the diagnosis may be easily missed according to a study published in the Oxford Journal, Clinical Infectious Disease, which states:

- only 50%–60% of patients with the disease recall having received a tick bite
- often the erythema migrans rash is absent or not in the shape of a bulls-eye
- according to health departments around the United States, the typical bulls-eye rash is only reported in 35%–60% of patients with the disease
- frank arthritis is only seen in 20%–30% of patients with the disease; and

WHEREAS, controversy exists regarding the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease. Patients with persistent symptoms after standard (2–4-week) antibiotic therapy for tick borne illness have been denied further antibiotic treatment by insurance companies as a result of the perception that long-term infection with the Lyme spirochete, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and associated tick borne pathogens is rare or nonexistent; and

Resolution No. 159 June 18, 2013

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WHEREAS, several recent scientific studies have proven the existence of long-term chronic tick borne infections and proven the benefit of long term treatment; and

WHEREAS, direct testimony given before the Ulster County Lyme Disease Committee detailed the long term, chronic and crippling consequences Ulster County and New York State residence suffered due to the misdiagnosis of these tick borne illnesses, as well as the problems obtaining insurance coverage for treatment, even when experienced and reliable physicians call for treatment; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Lyme Disease Committee recognized the need for additional educational measures for the public and medical professionals in the area of tick borne disease; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature urges the New York State Governor and Legislature to ensure the passage of A05174/S03478; and, be it further

RESOLVED, the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature is hereby directed to forward copies of this resolution to Governor Andrew Cuomo; New York State Senate Majority Co-Leader Dean Skelos, Majority Co-Leader Jeff Klein, Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senate Finance Committee Chair John DeFrancisco, and Senators William Larkin, Jr., John Bonacic, Cecelia Tkaczyk and James Seward; New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Joseph Morelle, Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, and Assemblymembers Claudia Tenney, Peter Lopez, Kevin Cahill and Frank Skartados, and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 20 NOES: 0
(Legislator Robert Parete arrived at 7:28 PM,
Legislator Mary Wawro arrived at 7:49 PM,
Legislator Harris left at 7:45 PM,
Legislator Briggs left at 8:30 PM,
Legislator Lopez left at 9:30 PM)

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Passed Committee: Health and Personnel on June 3, 2013

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

This is to certify that I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster have compared the foregoing resolution with the original resolution now on file in the office of said clerk, and which was adopted by said Legislature on the 18th Day of June, 2013, and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 20th Day of June in the year Two Thousand and Thirteen.

|s| Victoria A. Fabella
Victoria A. Fabella, Clerk
Ulster County Legislature