

---

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 316 Session of  
2017

---

INTRODUCED BY BAKER, FREEMAN, DiGIROLAMO, IRVIN, CALTAGIRONE,  
CORBIN, BURNS, V. BROWN, WATSON, HAHN, MACKENZIE, PICKETT,  
PEIFER, HENNESSEY, MALONEY, METZGAR, BOBACK, READSHAW,  
CHARLTON, STAATS, SCHLOSSBERG, DEAN, WARD, MURT, BIZZARRO,  
LONGIETTI, VAZQUEZ, O'BRIEN, DUSH, SONNEY, RYAN, CAUSER,  
JAMES, EMRICK, McNEILL, MEHAFFIE, TALLMAN, R. BROWN,  
KAUFFMAN, PASHINSKI, BARRAR, B. MILLER, SCHWEYER, MILLARD,  
OBERLANDER, KINSEY, PHILLIPS-HILL AND ZIMMERMAN, MAY 5, 2017

---

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MAY 5, 2017

---

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2017 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 and

10 WHEREAS, The frequency of diagnosed and reported Lyme disease  
11 cases has increased dramatically over the past several years;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, The most recent 15-year surveillance study of the  
14 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), published in

1 2008, reveals continued emergence and geographic expansion of  
2 Lyme disease across the United States; and

3 WHEREAS, The CDC study reports a disproportionate increase  
4 among children and recommends a Public Health Action to call for  
5 an increase in targeted prevention strategies, tick avoidance,  
6 early disease recognition and early treatment interventions; and

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

12 WHEREAS, In the last six years, Pennsylvania ranked highest  
13 in the country in the number of confirmed cases of Lyme disease;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, In 2016, Pennsylvania reported 12,200 new cases of  
16 Lyme Disease; and

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

23 WHEREAS, The most common way to acquire Lyme and related  
24 diseases is to be bitten by a tick that carries the spirochete;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is not limited to age or ethnic  
27 boundaries; and

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

1       WHEREAS, If not caught early, Lyme disease can lead to  
2 chronic debilitating illness that is very difficult to  
3 eradicate; and

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

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

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

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

21       WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth should be aware of  
22 early, disseminated and late/persistent symptoms and should know  
23 that a negative Lyme test cannot rule out Lyme disease; and

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

29       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the  
30 month of May 2017 as "Lyme Disease Awareness Month" in

1 Pennsylvania in a continued effort to benefit the overall health  
2 and quality of life of the residents of this Commonwealth by  
3 increasing their awareness of the threat of infected tick bites  
4 and the potential seriousness of Lyme disease and other tick-  
5 borne disorders.