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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 105 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, BLAKE, FARNESE, SABATINA, FONTANA,  
DINNIMAN, ARGALL, BREWSTER, BROWNE, SCAVELLO, AUMENT,  
HUTCHINSON, WHITE, FOLMER, RAFFERTY, KILLION, BARTOLOTTA,  
MENSCH, VOGEL, HUGHES, REGAN, VULAKOVICH AND YAW, MAY 8, 2017

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INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, MAY 8, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2017 as "Lyme and Tick-borne  
2 Disease Awareness 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 such as  
7 Babesiosis, Bartonellosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever,  
8 Ehrlichiosis and others pose a serious threat to the quality of  
9 life of many Pennsylvanians, with the frequency of diagnosed and  
10 reported Lyme disease cases increasing dramatically over the  
11 past several years; and

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

16 WHEREAS, The CDC study reports a disproportionate increase  
17 among children and recommends a Public Health Action to call for

1 an increase in targeted prevention strategies, tick avoidance,  
2 early disease recognition and early treatment interventions; and

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

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

11 WHEREAS, In 2016, Pennsylvania reported 12,200 cases, which  
12 translates to 122,000 new cases and approximately 40% of the  
13 nation's cases in Pennsylvania alone, and reflects another  
14 increase from 2015's 10,817 new cases (provisional data); and

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

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

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

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

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

1 eradicate; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of May 2017 as  
28 "Lyme and Tick-borne Disease Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania in  
29 a continued effort to benefit the overall health and quality of  
30 life of the residents of this Commonwealth by increasing their

- 1 awareness of the threat of tick bites and the potential
- 2 seriousness of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases.