

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 1188

PRINTER'S NO. 1585

AMOUNT

See Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

April 5, 2022

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Brooks

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 1188 establishes the Lyme Disease and Related Tick-Borne Illness Diagnosis and Treatment Act.

The bill authorizes a health care professional to order diagnostic testing and prescribe, administer or dispense antibiotic therapy for the therapeutic purpose of eliminating or controlling a patient's infection or symptoms upon a diagnosis of Lyme disease or a related tick-borne illness.

The bill requires the health care professional to consult and report to the statewide registry when making a clinical diagnosis for the purpose of advancing tick-borne diseases and illness research.

Senate Bill 1188 directs the Department of Health (department) to do all of the following:

- Establish a comprehensive educational program to inform healthcare professionals of the requirements of this act;
- Distribute culturally and linguistically appropriate literature about Lyme disease and related tick-borne illnesses for specific audiences like health care professionals, patients and the general public. These materials shall be made available at no cost; and
- Partner with the Tick Research Lab of Pennsylvania at East Stroudsburg University to develop an electronic database for use by the Tick Research Lab, the department and health care professionals. The database shall include nonidentifiable patient information such as testing results, zip code and county location of where the tick was extracted.

The bill requires that a health insurance policy or government program shall provide coverage for individuals or recipients seeking treatment for Lyme disease or related tick-borne illness testing and stipulates coverage must include all diagnostic testing and prescribed treatment.

The bill specifies that coverage shall be subject to copayment, deductible and coinsurance provisions and any other general exclusions or limitations of a health

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insurance policy or government program to the same extent as other medical services covered by the policy or program are subject to these provisions.

The bill clarifies that insurance coverage shall apply to any health insurance policy offered, issued or renewed on or after July 1, 2023, in the Commonwealth to groups of 51 or more employees, but may not apply to any of the following policies:

- A hospital indemnity policy;
- An accident-only policy;
- A specified disease policy;
- A long-term care or disability income policy;
- A credit-only policy;
- A dental-only policy;
- A vision-only policy;
- A Medicare or supplement policy;
- A federally funded plan, including TRICARE, formerly CHAMPUS, covering military personnel and dependents, Veterans Administration, and the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan;
- Self-insured plans, subject to federal law;
- An automobile medical payment policy;
- A fixed indemnity policy; and
- Another similar policy providing for limited benefits.

Senate Bill 1188 requires that on January 1, 2025, insurers shall make a report to the Insurance Department to evaluate the implementation of this coverage.

The bill directs the Department of Health to promulgate rules and regulations to administer and enforce this act.

This act shall take effect 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Department of Health estimates that Senate Bill 1188 will cost the Commonwealth \$1.8 million in the first year of implementation and \$1.1 million annually thereafter.

The department projects a one-time cost of \$1 million for information technology services necessary to develop the statewide registry. The \$1.1 million for ongoing costs assumes three new clerical employees to perform data entry for the registry and a project manager to oversee the development and finances of the registry.

Enactment of this legislation will have no fiscal impact on the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS currently provides coverage for testing and treatment for Lyme disease and tick-borne illnesses.