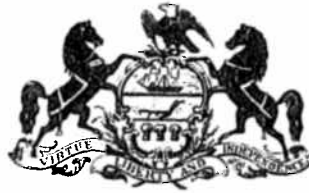


**DICK L. HESS, MEMBER**

ROOM 213, RYAN OFFICE BUILDING  
PO BOX 202078  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2078  
PHONE: (717) 787-7076  
FAX: (717) 705-1855

133 SOUTH RICHARD STREET  
BEDFORD, PENNSYLVANIA 15522  
PHONE: (814) 623-9097  
FAX: (814) 623-6633

314 LINCOLN WAY EAST  
SUITE A  
MCCONNELLSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17233  
PHONE: (717) 485-4430  
FAX: (717) 485-3979



*House of Representatives*  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

COMMERCE,  
REPUBLICAN CHAIRMAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
RULES  
POLICY

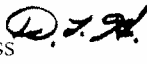
CAUCUSES

FIREMEN'S  
SPORTSMEN'S  
COAL  
TIMBER  
ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS  
MOTORSPORTS

APPOINTMENT

PENNVEST - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January 3, 2011

**TO:** All House Members  
**FROM:** Representative Dick L. Hess   
**SUBJECT:** Introduction of Legislation  
Lyme Disease Education, Prevention & Treatment

---

I plan to introduce legislation establishing a task force for Lyme disease and providing for insurance coverage of treatment for long term Lyme disease as prescribed by the patient's physician.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pennsylvania ranks 4th in the nation in the incidence of Lyme Disease, with 4,950 confirmed cases in 2009. The incidence of Lyme disease is highest in southeastern Pennsylvania, but is found across the Commonwealth.

Caught in its early stage, Lyme disease is readily cured with oral antibiotics. However, left untreated or undertreated, Lyme disease can result in serious complications. When Lyme disease reaches this late stage, more intensive therapy is required to treat this disease. Once they receive the correct diagnosis and appropriate treatment is implemented, nearly all patients report marked improvement.

It is not uncommon for Lyme disease to go undetected, undertreated or misdiagnosed. As a result, many Pennsylvanians and their health care providers are frustrated with the inability to properly diagnose and treat this disease. In addition, many people report inadequate insurance coverage or inability to access treatment.

This legislation directs the Department of Health to establish a task force to investigate and make recommendations to the Department regarding the prevention of Lyme disease and other tick borne infections in the Commonwealth. In addition, the Department is directed to develop a program of public and professional education on Lyme disease in order to raise awareness of the long term effects of misdiagnoses and to develop public information and education on Lyme disease.

This legislation further provides that a physician may prescribe long-term antibiotic therapy for late stage Lyme disease. The bill will require all health care insurance policies to cover treatment for Lyme disease, including long term therapies, when prescribed by the treating physician.

If you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Barb Ramsey at [bramsev@pahousegop.com](mailto:bramsev@pahousegop.com) or call 787-7076.