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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 943 Session of  
2018

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INTRODUCED BY TALLMAN, MAY 24, 2018

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, MAY 24, 2018

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the United States Food and Drug Administration to  
2 promptly consider candidates for Lyme disease vaccinations  
3 currently seeking approval under the drug approval process.

4 WHEREAS, Vector-borne diseases, which are those diseases  
5 caused by ticks, mosquitoes and fleas, have more than tripled  
6 from 2004 to 2016; and

7 WHEREAS, Tick-borne diseases are becoming a serious public  
8 health problem in this country; and

9 WHEREAS, Tick-borne diseases are increasing exponentially and  
10 are caused by an infection with a variety of pathogens,  
11 including bacteria, viruses and protozoa; and

12 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-  
13 borne illness in the United States, affecting more than 300,000  
14 individuals each year; and

15 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia*  
16 *burgdorferi* and transmitted to humans through the bite of an  
17 infected black-legged tick; and

18 WHEREAS, Lyme disease threatens the quality of life of  
19 residents of and visitors to this Commonwealth and poses a

1 significant economic burden on Pennsylvania and the United  
2 States; and

3 WHEREAS, Residents of and visitors to Pennsylvania are  
4 especially vulnerable to Lyme disease and tick-borne diseases,  
5 as evidenced by this Commonwealth's ranking as the leading state  
6 in reported cases; and

7 WHEREAS, Each of the 67 counties of this Commonwealth has  
8 reported ticks infected with bacteria associated with Lyme  
9 disease and other tick-borne diseases; and

10 WHEREAS, In 2015, the Pennsylvania Task Force on Lyme Disease  
11 issued a report which highlighted the significant economic  
12 burden of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses on the  
13 United States and Pennsylvania; and

14 WHEREAS, More than \$1 billion in annual medical expenses in  
15 the United States have been attributed to Lyme disease as well  
16 as up to \$10,000 per patient annually in lost productivity; and

17 WHEREAS, Patients with Lyme disease required 87% more visits  
18 to the doctor and 71% more visits to the emergency room than  
19 those patients without Lyme disease; and

20 WHEREAS, The Task Force on Lyme Disease applied cost  
21 estimates to the Commonwealth and determined that, when  
22 considering Pennsylvania's approximately 7,400 confirmed and  
23 reported Lyme disease cases, the annual estimated cost in lost  
24 productivity alone may likely exceed \$74 million; and

25 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has taken important steps regarding  
26 awareness, prevention and surveillance of Lyme disease by  
27 establishing the Task Force on Lyme Disease and launching the  
28 "Don't Let a Tick Make You Sick" campaign; and

29 WHEREAS, While such actions remain an integral part of  
30 precautionary efforts, rising statistics and costs represent the

1 need to focus on preventative care and treatment; and

2 WHEREAS, Treatment options exist for individuals diagnosed  
3 with Lyme disease but there is currently no vaccination on the  
4 market despite one previously being available to consumers; and

5 WHEREAS, LYMERix, which was taken off the market in 2002 due  
6 to lack of sales and mounting fears of side effects, was  
7 developed by the company currently known as GlaxoSmithKline and  
8 approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)  
9 in 1998; and

10 WHEREAS, Data conducted on LYMERix show no difference in the  
11 incidence of adverse events, other than hypersensitivity,  
12 between those individuals who received the vaccine and those who  
13 did not; and

14 WHEREAS, Recent news has indicated that at least five groups  
15 of researchers at companies and academic centers are working on  
16 vaccinations for Lyme disease; and

17 WHEREAS, Valneva, a global independent vaccine company,  
18 announced in December 2016 that its vaccine candidate against  
19 Lyme disease, VLA15, was progressing into clinical testing in  
20 the drug approval process following clearance from the FDA;  
21 therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
23 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the United States Food and  
24 Drug Administration to promptly consider candidates for Lyme  
25 disease vaccinations currently seeking approval under the drug  
26 approval process; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
28 the United States Food and Drug Administration at 10903 New  
29 Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20993-0002.