
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 287 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY BROOKS, LANGERHOLC, HAYWOOD, MARTIN, PHILLIPS-
HILL, ROTHMAN, COLLETT, COMITTA, BROWN, COSTA, SANTARSIERO,
DILLON, CAPPELLETTI, KANE, SCHWANK, J. WARD, MASTRIANO,
CULVER AND MILLER, MAY 17, 2024

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, MAY 17, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2024 as "Lyme Disease and Tick-
2 Borne Illness Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the
4 spirochete *borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted to humans
5 through the bite of an infected *ixodes scapularis* tick, also
6 known as a blacklegged tick or deer tick; and

7 WHEREAS, Lyme disease and tick-borne illnesses such as
8 babesiosis, bartonellosis, anaplasmosis, Rocky Mountain spotted
9 fever, ehrlichiosis and others pose a serious threat to the
10 health and quality of life of many residents of this
11 Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, Early stage symptoms of Lyme disease can include
13 erythema migrans (red, oval or round rash), fever, chills,
14 headache, muscle and joint pain and swollen lymph nodes; and

15 WHEREAS, Later stage symptoms of Lyme disease can include
16 severe headaches and neck stiffness, additional erythema
17 migrans, arthritis with severe joint pain and swelling,

1 particularly in the knees and other large joints, facial palsy,
2 intermittent pain in tendons, muscles, joints and bones, heart
3 palpitations or an irregular heartbeat, episodes of dizziness or
4 shortness of breath, inflammation of the brain and spinal cord,
5 nerve pain, shooting pains, numbness or tingling in the hands or
6 feet and problems with short-term memory; and

7 WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and
8 Prevention, Lyme disease is the most common vector-borne disease
9 in the United States; and

10 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is one of the most common reportable
11 infectious diseases in this Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2022, 8,413 Lyme disease cases were reported in
13 this Commonwealth, but the Centers for Disease Control and
14 Prevention estimate underreporting by a factor of 10 and project
15 occurrence rates, more accurately, near 85,000; and

16 WHEREAS, From 1990 to 2022, there were 150,677 confirmed Lyme
17 disease cases in this Commonwealth, but due to the fact that the
18 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's number only
19 represents confirmed cases, the actual number of Lyme disease
20 cases may be far greater, possibly more than 1.5 million; and

21 WHEREAS, Approximately 20% of Lyme disease cases will cause
22 long-term chronic symptoms, potentially affecting 300,000 people
23 in this Commonwealth; and

24 WHEREAS, Approximately one in four cases of Lyme disease
25 occur in children, and children five to nine years of age are at
26 the greatest risk for contracting Lyme disease; and

27 WHEREAS, The blacklegged tick has been found in all 67
28 counties in this Commonwealth, verifying that every resident
29 from Erie to Philadelphia must take precautions to prevent the
30 spread of Lyme disease and tick-borne illnesses; and

1 WHEREAS, In 2022, 54.9% of ticks tested in this Commonwealth
2 were infected with at least one tick-borne pathogen, including
3 Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, hard tick-borne
4 relapsing fever and Powassan virus; and

5 WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth can greatly reduce
6 their chance of tick bites and pathogen transmission during the
7 spring season by taking proper precautions while engaged in
8 outdoor activities, making frequent tick checks and removing and
9 disposing of ticks promptly and properly; and

10 WHEREAS, The Tick Research Lab of Pennsylvania, an East
11 Stroudsburg University-affiliated lab, is dedicated to providing
12 free, fast, highly rated laboratory-quality tick testing to
13 residents of this Commonwealth for Lyme disease, anaplasmosis,
14 babesiosis, ehrlichiosis and Rocky Mountain spotted fever; and

15 WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth should be aware of
16 early, disseminated and late and/or persistent symptoms, and
17 that a negative Lyme disease test cannot rule out Lyme disease;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, The early clinical diagnosis and appropriate
20 treatment of these tick-borne diseases and illnesses can greatly
21 reduce the risks of continued, diverse and chronic symptoms that
22 can affect every system and organ of the human body and often
23 every aspect of an individual's life; and

24 WHEREAS, "Lyme Disease and Tick-Borne Illness Awareness
25 Month" provides an opportunity to focus on these significant and
26 complex diseases, through dissemination of information on
27 prevention and personal protection, raising public awareness of
28 the causes, effects, potential severity, diagnostic challenges
29 and treatment options of Lyme disease and underscoring important
30 education efforts surrounding Lyme disease and other tick-borne

1 illnesses; therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of May 2024 as
3 "Lyme Disease and Tick-Borne Illness Awareness Month" in
4 Pennsylvania; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Senate continue efforts to benefit the
6 overall health and quality of life of the residents of this
7 Commonwealth by increasing awareness of the threat of tick bites
8 and the potential seriousness of Lyme disease and other tick-
9 borne illnesses.