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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 102 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY BROOKS, MASTRIANO, LANGERHOLC, BARTOLOTTA,  
J. WARD, BROWNE, SCAVELLO, KEARNEY, MARTIN, VOGEL, MENSCH,  
ARGALL, PITTMAN, COSTA, YUDICHAK, KANE, YAW, GORDNER, STEFANO  
AND CAPPELLETTI, MAY 4, 2021

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REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, MAY 4, 2021

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2021 as "Lyme Disease and Tick-  
2 Borne Illness Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a bacterial infection transmitted  
4 primarily by ticks; and

5 WHEREAS, Lyme disease is caused by the spirochete *Borrelia*  
6 *burgdorferi* and is transmitted to humans through the bite of  
7 infected blacklegged ticks; and

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

13 WHEREAS, Symptoms of Lyme disease can include fever,  
14 headache, fatigue and a characteristic rash called erythema  
15 migrans; and

16 WHEREAS, If left untreated, the infection can spread to  
17 joints, the heart and the nervous system; and

1       WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and  
2 Prevention, Lyme disease is the most common vector-borne disease  
3 in the United States; and

4       WHEREAS, In 2018, 10,208 Lyme disease cases were reported in  
5 this Commonwealth, but the Centers for Disease Control and  
6 Prevention estimate under-reporting by a factor of 10 and  
7 project occurrence rates, more accurately, in the 100,000s; and

8       WHEREAS, From 2000 to 2018, there were 106,718 confirmed Lyme  
9 disease cases in this Commonwealth, but due to the fact that the  
10 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's number only  
11 represents confirmed cases, the actual number of Lyme disease  
12 cases may be far greater, possibly over 1 million; and

13       WHEREAS, Approximately one in four cases of Lyme disease  
14 occur in children, and children ages five to nine are at the  
15 greatest risk for contracting Lyme disease; and

16       WHEREAS, This Commonwealth has ranked the highest in the  
17 country in the number of confirmed Lyme disease cases for the  
18 past eight years; and

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

23       WHEREAS, Residents of this Commonwealth can greatly reduce  
24 their chance of tick bites and pathogen transmission during the  
25 spring season by taking proper precautions while engaged in  
26 outdoor activities, making frequent tick checks and removing and  
27 disposing of ticks promptly and properly; and

28       WHEREAS, The Tick Research Lab of Pennsylvania, an East  
29 Stroudsburg University-affiliated lab, is dedicated to providing  
30 free, fast, highly-rated, laboratory-quality tick testing to

1 residents of this Commonwealth for Lyme disease, anaplasmosis,  
2 babesiosis, ehrlichiosis and Rocky Mountain spotted fever; and

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

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

11 WHEREAS, "Lyme Disease and Tick-Borne Illness Awareness  
12 Month" provides an opportunity to focus on these significant and  
13 complex diseases, provides information on prevention and  
14 personal protection and raises public awareness of the causes,  
15 effects, potential severity, diagnostic challenges and treatment  
16 options of Lyme disease and underscores important education  
17 efforts surrounding Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses;  
18 therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of May 2021 as  
20 "Lyme Disease and Tick-Borne Illness Awareness Month" in  
21 Pennsylvania in a continued effort to benefit the overall health  
22 and quality of life of the residents of this Commonwealth by  
23 increasing their awareness of the threat of tick bites and the  
24 potential seriousness of Lyme disease and other tick-borne  
25 illnesses.