



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 719

Resolution declaring May as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month” in the City of New York.

By Council Members Gennaro, Gentile, Gonzalez, Mealy, Recchia Jr., Sanders Jr. and Weprin

Whereas, According to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of an infected deer tick (*Ixodes scapularis*); and

Whereas, The Centers For Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices indicates that Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the United States; and

Whereas, NYSDOH statistics reveal that since Lyme disease first became reportable in 1986, over 68,000 cases have been confirmed in New York State; and

Whereas, While patients treated with antibiotics in the early stage of infection usually recover rapidly and completely, if left untreated, Lyme disease can cause a number of debilitating health problems; and

Whereas, According to the book, Lyme Disease, and Associated Diseases, The Basics, 4th Edition 2004, by Douglas W. Fearn (the “Fearn book”), if left untreated, Lyme disease symptoms may “[vary] tremendously among individuals”; and

Whereas, Medical experts indicate that the most common symptoms of untreated Lyme disease include unrelenting fatigue, joint or muscle pain, vision or hearing abnormalities, numbness or tingling, particularly at the extremities, facial paralysis, heart damage, psychological disturbances, and stomach problems; and

Whereas, Untreated, Lyme disease can also result in neurological disorders, crippling arthritis, blindness, deafness, psychiatric or psychological disorders, or death; and

Whereas, The Fearn book indicates that although some people may never have an occurrence of symptoms following exposure to Lyme disease, “others may become permanently disabled from LD [Lyme disease] that is untreated or inadequately treated,” and that “[s]erious symptoms can appear immediately [upon exposure] or... take months or years to develop”; and

Whereas, The importance of Lyme disease awareness is greater than ever, as indicated by disturbing trends revealed by New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) statistics; and

Whereas, Such DOHMH statistics indicate that an average of 243 cases of Lyme disease were reported in New York City annually from 1996 through 2000, an average of 297 cases were reported annually from 2001 through 2005, and 357 and 399 cases were reported in 2004 and 2005, respectively; and

Whereas, The recognition of the month of May as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month” is part of a nationwide effort to increase public awareness of this debilitating illness; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York hereby declares May as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month” in the City of New York.

MB
LS # 1817
11/06/06