



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Assembly Member Glick and Senator Hoylman Pass Legislation to Expand Tuberculosis Testing

BRAD HOYLMAN June 16, 2015

| ISSUE: **HEALTH**

New bill passed by both houses comes amid news of XDR-TB, a new drug resistant strain of Tuberculosis

ALBANY – Today, the New York State Legislature passed legislation introduced by Assembly Member Deborah Glick and Senator Brad Hoylman (A.7034/S.103) to expand tuberculosis testing by allowing registered nurses to administer tests without needing a patient specific order from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner. The bill, which passed the Assembly today and the State Senate on June 10, comes amid recent reports of a new drug resistant strain of TB called XDR-TB.

Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick said: “TB is a dangerous disease and its resurgence makes it imperative to ensure that the availability of testing for it is improved. This bill does just that and I urge the Governor to sign it into law.”

State Senator Brad Hoylman said: “I’m very pleased that both the Senate and the Assembly have voted to pass legislation I introduced with my colleague Assembly Member Deborah Glick to expand tuberculosis testing. Our bill, which comes amid the recent troubling discovery of a new drug resistant strain of tuberculosis that is nearly 70% fatal, would allow nurses to administer TB tests without needing a patient specific order from a physician or

nurse practitioner. Testing is a critical tool that can be used to combat this public health threat and is especially important to people with compromised immune systems including seniors and people with HIV/AIDS.”

On June 9, the *New York Times* reported that a woman with tuberculosis flew from India to O'Hare International Airport in Chicago in early April. She travelled to Illinois, Tennessee and Missouri before eventually seeking medical care weeks later. After being tested, she discovered she had the extensively drug resistant form of tuberculosis called XDR-TB, spurring the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state health departments to begin searching for those who the woman had come into contact with.

While TB is not known for being particularly contagious, it can remain latent in people for extended periods of time before becoming symptomatic, underscoring the importance of TB testing. In 2013, 13,000 people in the United States were infected with tuberculosis.

S.103 passed the State Senate unanimously by a vote of 62-0 and A.7034 passed the Assembly by a vote of 102-0.

###