



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

Sen. Farley Announces Senate Passes Legislation to Fight Lyme Disease and Other Tick-Borne Illnesses

HUGH T. FARLEY June 17, 2015

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State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I – Schenectady) reported that he and his colleagues in the New York State Senate recently passed legislation to help stop the spread of Lyme disease across the state. The three bills are part of the Senate Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases' continuing efforts to promote best practices for reducing public exposure to ticks, as well as identifying and responding to Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections.

Bill S5802 would help provide homeowners with a reliable source of information on how to protect their properties from ticks. The legislation would require the state Department of Environmental Conservation to develop and annually update guidelines for treating residential properties based on integrated pest management, an approach that uses a variety of pest control techniques to monitor insects while minimizing risks to human health and the environment.

Early education and prevention are critical to controlling the rise in tick-borne infections. Bill S5803 would authorize the state Department of Health to design a Lyme and tick-borne disease prevention program that explains how to safely use insect repellents, strategies for tick removal, recommendations for reducing exposure to ticks, and an appropriate course of action for individuals to take once a tick has been removed.

Bill S5804 would authorize the state Department of Education to collaborate with the state Department of Health to develop instructional materials on tick-borne infections for children. These resources would provide visual guides and other age-appropriate materials to teach children how to safely protect themselves from ticks, as well as identify and react to a tick bite.

Lyme disease is a potentially debilitating and life-threatening illness that initially centered on Long Island and the Hudson Valley, but has since spread across New York. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, New York has the third highest number of confirmed cases of Lyme disease in the nation, and the disease has been reported in every region of the state.

The Senate's Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases is focused on addressing the geographic expansion of tick-borne illnesses in New York by taking a comprehensive approach that examines ways to encourage detection and prevention initiatives. In this

year's budget, Senator Serino helped lead the Senate's successful efforts to include \$600,000 that supports Lyme and tick-borne disease research and the state's disease elimination and reduction efforts.

The bills have been sent to the Assembly.