



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senate approves legislation O'Mara co-sponsors to strengthen state response to Lyme and tick-borne diseases: Legislation follows recommendations of Senate task force

THOMAS F. O'MARA March 29, 2018

| ISSUE: **LYME AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES**



We've taken important actions over the past few years to broaden the state's overall response to the spread of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, but much more needs to be done, particularly in the areas of reporting, testing and treatment, and education and awareness.

Albany, N.Y., March 29—The Senate has unanimously approved legislation co-sponsored by Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), a member of the Senate Task Force on Lyme and Tick-

Borne Diseases (TBDs), to strengthen New York State's response to the rise of these diseases.

"We've taken important actions over the past few years to broaden the state's overall response to the spread of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, but much more needs to be done, particularly in the areas of reporting, testing and treatment, and education and awareness. This legislation would greatly strengthen New York's long-term strategy," said O'Mara.

The legislation ([S7171](#)) O'Mara co-sponsors would require the state to conduct an impact study considering how infectious diseases and blood-borne pathogens, including Lyme and TBDs, may have correlations with mental illness in infected individuals. The new "Mental Health Impacts Report" would enable better treatment of the mental health consequences associated with these infections.

The legislation now moves to the Assembly where it is sponsored by Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (D,I,WF-Forestburgh), chair of the Assembly Mental Health Committee.

O'Mara said that the measure is part of the Senate's latest legislative package representing recommendations first made in a Task Force report released last October, "Ticking Time Bomb: An Update on the Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Epidemic in New York State."

The full Senate report can be viewed [HERE](#).