



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

## SERINO/BARRETT LEGISLATION TO PROMOTE LYME AWARENESS SIGNED INTO LAW

SUSAN SERINO September 5, 2019

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

ALBANY, NY—Senator Sue Serino and Assemblymember Didi Barrett today announced that a chapter amendment to their bill that would require the installation of Lyme and tick-borne disease (TBD) warning signs at state-managed parks has recently been signed into law.

The amendment will allow the state department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to do a needs-based assessment of the state's parks and trails to determine where the new signage will be most effective.

"One tick-check can make all the difference," said Senator Sue Serino. "We want New Yorkers to be able to make the most out of all the state parks and trails we have to offer, but we also want to ensure they have the information they need to protect themselves against Lyme and tick-borne diseases when they do. We know from experience that a simple reminder can go a long way in helping people stay tick-free and that's what this bill is all about. This legislation will make a tangible difference in the lives of New Yorkers and tourists alike, and I thank the Governor and the Office of Parks and Recs for working with us to make this kind of awareness a priority."

Assemblymember Barrett said, “Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses threaten the health and safety of local families and it’s critical that we continue to educate and raise awareness. By placing signs at trail heads and state parks, we can ensure that New Yorkers and visitors alike understand the risks throughout the year as ticks can remain active as long as the temperature is above freezing.”

New York is home to more than 2,000 miles of mapped trails in state parks and historic sites. According to the NYdatabases.com, New York State’s parks welcomed 71.6 million visitors in 2017, an increase over the roughly 70 million who came through in 2016. The state parks play a vital role in many local economies and add real value to the lives of countless New Yorkers.

While Lyme and TBDs have long been regarded as problems exclusive to the Hudson Valley and Long Island, they are spreading to other areas of the state where residents and tourists may be unaware of the risk they pose. The bill seeks to ensure that New Yorkers have the tools they need to take appropriate precautions to protect against Lyme and tick-borne diseases as they continue to enjoy all that the state’s parks have to offer. The legislation is part of a multi-pronged approach to combatting the Lyme and TBD epidemic by focusing on prevention, treatment, and education.