

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 3883**

By Ms. Callahan of Sutton, petition of Jennifer M. Callahan and others for legislation to establish a center for Lyme Disease in the Department of Public Health. Public Health.

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PETITION OF:

Jennifer M. Callahan                      Ellen Story  
Bradford Hill                                Mary E. Grant  
Paul J. P. Loscocco                        Barbara A. L'Italien

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO TICK BORNE ILLNESSES.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

- 1     SECTION 1. Chapter 17 of the General Laws is hereby amended
- 2     by adding the following two sections:—
- 3     Section 18. There shall be in the department a center for Lyme
- 4     disease. The center shall adopt standards of excellence in research,
- 5     education and chemical services to develop expertise in the assess-
- 6     ment, diagnoses and treatment of Lyme disease. The center shall
- 7     work with graduate medical and nursing programs to establish cur-
- 8     riculum. The center shall develop clinical guidelines that can be
- 9     adopted by hospitals and clinics in assessing, testing and treating
- 10    tick-borne illnesses. The center shall work with the department of
- 11    education to develop educational materials and training programs for
- 12    school health personnel on detecting sings and symptoms of tick-
- 13    borne illnesses in school age children.
- 14    Section 19. There shall be an advisory council on tick-borne ill-
- 15    nesses consisting of 3 persons to be appointed by the commissioner
- 16    experienced in the field of treating tick-borne illnesses. Said advi-
- 17    sory council shall assist the center for Lyme disease in coordinating
- 18    the efforts of public and private agencies concerned with the preven-
- 19    tion and treatment of tick-borne illnesses and advise the center in

20 policy and priorities for comprehensive treatment of tick-borne dis-  
21 eases. The advisory committee shall appoint the chief executive  
22 officer of the center.

1 SECTION 3. Section 9A of Chapter 118E of the General Laws, as  
2 most recently amended by Section 17, Chapter 324 of the Acts of  
3 2006, is hereby amended by adding the following subsection:—

4 (16) Medical benefits provided under this section shall include  
5 coverage for long term antibiotic to therapy for diagnosed patients  
6 with tick-borne illnesses.

1 SECTION 4. Chapter 175 of the General Laws is hereby amended  
2 by inserting after section 108J the following section:—

3 Section 108K. An individual policy of accident and sickness  
4 insurance issued pursuant to Section 108 or group policy accident  
5 and sickness insurance issued pursuant to section 110 shall provide  
6 coverage for long term antibiotic therapy for diagnosed patients with  
7 tick-borne illnesses.

1 SECTION 5. Chapter 176A of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after section 8AA the following section:—

3 Section 8BB. Any contract, except contracts providing supple-  
4 mental coverage to Medicare or other governmental programs,  
5 between a subscriber and the corporation under an individual or  
6 group hospital service plan which shall be delivered or issued or  
7 renewed in the Commonwealth shall provide, as a basic benefit to all  
8 individual subscribers and members within the Commonwealth and  
9 to all group members having a principal place of employment within  
10 the Commonwealth, for expense of long term antibiotic therapy for  
11 diagnosed patients with tick-borne illnesses.

1 SECTION 6. Chapter 176B of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after section 4AA the following section:—

3 Section 4BB. Any subscription certificate under an individual or  
4 group medical service agreement that shall be delivered, issued or  
5 renewed in the Commonwealth shall provide as benefits to all indi-  
6 vidual subscribers within the Commonwealth an all persons included  
7 in Section 4C, coverage for long term antibiotic therapy for diag-  
8 nosed patients with tick-borne illnesses.

1 SECTION 7. Chapter 176G of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after section 4S the following section:—  
3 Section 4T. Any health maintenance contract shall provide cov-  
4 erage for long term antibiotic therapy for diagnosed patients with  
5 tick-borne illnesses.

1 SECTION 8. The center for lyme's diseases shall conduct a  
2 lyme's public health screening study to establish broad symptom cri-  
3 teria and conduct free testing for lyme's disease in high risk regions.  
4 It shall research the estimated costs of contracting with a laboratory  
5 to conduct 2 Western Blot tests as a part of uniform screening among  
6 a certain defined study number of the public and it shall establish  
7 data collection parameters for all pilot screening study participants  
8 for various forms of tick-borne illnesses. The result of the study  
9 shall be reported to joint committee on health care.