

PA – Senate Banking & Ins. Committee SB 1199

June 22, 2010 Patricia V. Smith, President, Lyme Disease Association, Inc.

**Testimony to: The PA Senate Banking & Insurance Committee
The Honorable Senator Donald C. White, Chairman**

As background on Patricia V. Smith:

President, LDA
Strategic Advisory Board, Columbia University Medical Center Lyme & TBD Research Center
Advisor to Time for Lyme (CT) Former Chair, [NJ] Governor's Lyme Disease Advisory Council Washington DC- met with HHS, CDC, NIH, military
Invited to CDC Ft Collins, Vector-Borne Diseases Division (Lyme Program Headquarters)
Testified/invited to educate officials > dozen states

TESTIMONY: Thank you for the opportunity to testify favorably on Lyme disease bill SB 1199.

The Lyme Disease Association (LDA), an all-volunteer national non profit with 37 allied organizations nationwide, including a Pennsylvania affiliate, Chapter, and coalition, made the 2010 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) as an approved national charity. Its 11th CME accredited scientific conference will be held in October in Philadelphia. 19 Pennsylvania children benefited from LDA's *LymeAid 4 Kids*, providing children without insurance access to Lyme testing and treatment. LDA research grant recipients in Pennsylvania include Fox Chase Cancer Center, University of Pennsylvania, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and University of Pittsburg School of Nursing. LDA is an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) PESP partner and network partner with EPA and CDC, developing measures to reduce exposure to Lyme disease.

Lyme has been reported in all 50 states and 65 countries worldwide. According to the 2009 Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center report, confirmed cases of Lyme disease in the services were diagnosed at more than 120 military locations worldwide(i)

CDC states ages 5-9 are at the greatest risk of acquiring Lyme(ii), the most

prevalent vector-borne disease in the US. From 1990-2008, CDC reported 51,266 cases of Lyme in Pennsylvania, a number including my late parents. Only 10% of cases meeting CDC's narrow surveillance criteria are reported, thus, more than 1/2M (512,660) cases occurred in PA – not counting those clinically diagnosed, who most often develop chronic Lyme disease.

Treating doctors estimate 15-20% of patients develop chronic Lyme disease – one study shows that the impact of Lyme disease on physical health was at least equal to the disability of patients with congestive heart failure and osteoarthritis(iii). Many of these patients, often multiple family members(iv) now have to travel many hours outside Pennsylvania to find care. They don't have the resources to fight the vested interests stacked against them, which is why legislation is necessary to protect doctors who treat, ensuring that in-state treating doctors can't be prosecuted solely for providing necessary long-term treatment.