

ME Lyme Bill Passes Into Law

“An Act to Improve Access to Treatments for Lyme Disease” passed both houses of the Maine legislature and was given to the Governor who did not veto or sign the bill. Under Maine law, that means the bill becomes law. The bill provides for doctor protection for doctors who prescribe long term treatment for Lyme disease.

Congratulations to the Maine advocates who worked so hard to make this happen! The LDA provided testimony favorable to bill passage.

SUMMARY

This bill prohibits the Board of Licensure in Medicine from disciplining a physician or revoking or suspending a physician’s license for prescribing, administering or dispensing long-term antibiotic therapy to a patient with acute, persistent or chronic Lyme disease if the therapy was pursuant to a treatment plan recommended by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that considered the patient’s individual circumstance or was in the best judgment of the physician with respect to the particular patient or special clinical situation.

[Click here for testimony](#)

[Click here for bill language](#)

Maine Proposed Legislation

[Click here for LDA testimony letter to Maine Committee On Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development](#)

Maine Lyme Bill 416-597 Signed Into Law

Thanks largely to the efforts of MaineLyme, a non-profit, and primary sponsor Representative Sheryl Briggs, on June 24, 2013, Main Governor LePage signed the Lyme bills into law (Chapter 340). In April, the LDA wrote in support of the bills and requested inclusion as a resource on the Maine website. The law now includes the Lyme Disease Association website as a resource. Some of law text below:

1. Lyme disease may be difficult to diagnose and treat;
2. Some patients seem not to respond to the usual antibiotics used for treating Lyme disease and seem to have post-treatment Lyme disease syndrome. There are some doctors who believe that longer doses of antibiotics may sometimes be helpful. Some patients believe that they have benefited from extended treatments of antibiotics;
3. Antibiotics can be lifesaving medications but can have serious side effects, such as the development of drug-resistant organisms. A patient who contracts an infection from a drug-resistant organism may never fully recover;
4. A negative result for a Lyme disease test does not necessarily mean that Lyme disease is not present and if symptoms continue, the patient should contact a health care provider and inquire about the appropriateness of retesting or additional treatment; and
5. Information on treatment alternatives for treating Lyme disease is available

through Internet websites of organizations, including, but not limited to, MaineLyme, Lyme Disease Association, the Mayo Clinic, the National Institutes of Health and WebMD.

[Click here for bill text](#)

[Click here for LDA letter to Maine legislators](#)



(L to R) Rep. Sanderson, Bill Whitten (lobbyist and patient) Sally Jordan 12 yr, Lisa Jordan, Susan Holmes, Governor LePage, Happy Dickey RN, Rep. Sheryl Briggs (original Sponsor) Diane Farnum, Rhonda Buker, (both initiators of the bill), Rep. and Rep. Johnson (patient). Dr. Beatrice Szantyr is missing from this picture but was a huge factor in bill's success. Photo Courtesy MaineLyme.org.