

**Congressman Smith Introduces:
National Lyme & Tick-Borne
Diseases Control &
Accountability Act of 2018**



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2018—The Lyme Disease Association, Inc. announces the introduction of HR 5900,* “National Lyme and Tick-Borne

Diseases Control and Accountability Act of 2018'' into the US House of Representatives by Congressman Christopher H. Smith (NJ-4). The Act will establish the Office of Oversight and Coordination for Tick-Borne Diseases in the Office of the Secretary of Health & Human Services (HHS) to be headed by a director appointed by the Secretary. Representatives Peterson (D-MN7), Faso (R-NY19), Comstock (R-VA10) and Posey (R-FL8) have joined Mr. Smith in co-sponsoring the bill.

Its purposes are to oversee the creation and establishment of an integrated national strategy to overcome Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases (TBD) and to oversee and coordinate Lyme and TBD programs and activities across agencies and offices of HHS.

Reps. Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Collin Peterson (D-MN), the co-chairs of the Congressional Lyme Disease Caucus, and the other co-sponsors are pushing the bipartisan legislation to create a new national strategy for Lyme disease and strengthen treatment and prevention of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

According to LDA President Pat Smith, "There is an urgent need for the House to pass this bill so that Lyme and other tick-borne diseases (TBD) are addressed in a coordinated fashion. The US needs to play a leadership role in this effort, since Lyme is spreading around the globe as are many other TBD, ~20 in the US alone. The public is at risk, as are our children, since tick-borne disease cases have doubled over the past 13 years. I applaud Congressman Smith's continued focus on the impact upon individuals and families who have TBD and upon the public at large who may contract these diseases from ever increasing existing tick populations, and perhaps in the future, from a new tick such as the invasive *longicornis* tick now found in NJ—the impact of which tick is yet little understood."

Objectives of Office of Oversight and Coordination for Tick-

Borne Diseases include expansion and enhancement of epidemiological research & basic translational, clinical and biomedical research; expansion and improvement of surveillance and reporting of Lyme and TBD including coinfections; development of effective diagnostic tests to accurately and timely diagnose Lyme & TBD, including direct detection tests; development of treatments to cure or improve the lives of those affected with Lyme & TBD or who suffer from tick-induced disorder; design and conduct clinical trials of sufficient size and duration to support clinical recommendations; development of patient registries; documentation of experiences of health care professionals in diagnosing TBD; inclusion individuals with chronic Lyme disease in clinical, research, and service efforts; and coordination with international bodies to integrate and inform the fight against Lyme and TBD globally.

The Lyme Disease Association provided input into the development of the bill with the Office of Congressman Christopher Smith.

**LDA Note: HR 5900 introduced on 5/21 is the same as HR 5878 introduced on 5/18 – due to a technical glitch*

[Click here for full bill text HR 5878 \(the same as HR 5900\)](#)

[Click here for Congressman Smith's press release](#)

[Click here for LDA's Newsletter on Lyme bill](#)