

# Rep. Chris Smith (NJ) Plans Lyme Hearing

Congressman Christopher H. Smith (NJ-4), Chair of the Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights Subcommittee in the US House of Representatives, announced his plans for a Lyme disease hearing in his March Newsletter to his constituents.

In an article titled, *The Fight on Behalf of Lyme Disease Patients Continues, Smith Legislation Aims to Broaden Scientific Community Base Represented in Public Health Policy*, Congressman Smith states "As chairman of a House subcommittee which includes global health and global human rights within its jurisdiction, I plan to convene a hearing within the next couple of months on the global health problem of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases and their impact especially and including right here in N.J. It is anticipated the hearing will examine the scope of the worldwide problem of tick-borne diseases, current and emerging science and technologies, and impacts on patients."

ngg\_shortcode\_0\_placeholder

*Congressman Christopher Smith (NJ)*

*September 27, 2008 US House Floor in Washington, DC*

***Click picture for video links to floor debate***

*(Video shows Congressmen Christopher Smith (NJ) and Frank Wolf (VA) appearing on the US House floor in 2008 asking then Chair of the Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee Congressman Pallone (NJ) to have a hearing on the Lyme disease bill. Mr. Pallone agreed to a 2009 session hearing but that was never held.)*

The LDA has worked with Congressman Smith's office for more than 20 years and has been instrumental in highlighting issues affecting Lyme patients to his Office as well as to other Members of Congress in Washington.

Congressman Smith, along with his colleagues, has written official letters to agencies who deal with the disease such as the CDC and the NIH, including concerns on inadequate surveillance, lack of research, treatment guidelines and even on the Institute of Medicine (IOM) hearing.

In 2009, LDA met in the office of Congressman Smith with NIH Lyme Program officials, discussing lack of chronic Lyme disease research. [Click here for more details](#)

According to Lyme Disease Association (LDA) President, Pat Smith, "Congressman Christopher Smith has been a staunch advocate for Lyme issues since the early 90s, hosting the first off site Lyme hearing in the country in 1992 in NJ. He has gotten monies appropriated for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases through measures he initiated in DC. He also introduced the first bill devoted fully to Lyme disease in 1998 and also subsequent iterations of that bill." [Click here for details of these actions](#). Because of his dedication to Lyme disease, in 2009, the LDA gave Congressman Smith an [award](#) at its 10th annual Lyme and Other Tick-Borne Diseases Scientific Conference at National Harbor, MD.

Congressman Smith developed language for 2010 HHS Appropriations which was passed. It included language on **chronic Lyme** and also included research monies toward development of new Lyme disease tests. Congressman Frank Wolf worked to help secure passage in the House. [Click here for more information](#).

Congressman Smith HR 2557 in 2011 "To Provide For the Establishment of the Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee." [Click here for text of bill](#).

Contact your congressman/woman today and urge him/her to co-sponsor HR 2557. [Click here for phone blurb & sample email](#).

Ms. Smith added, "Congressman Smith has been the US House of Representatives' Lyme Caucus Co-Chair for a number of years now, and has facilitated many meetings with Lyme advocates and governmental officials and the military in DC to educate them to the plight of Lyme patients. Now, he is planning a hearing to examine the global scope of the problem and to determine the path that leads to preventing Lyme disease and finding its cure. Since Lyme cases continue to rise, we are fortunate to

have him as an ally and support the need for this long overdue hearing.” [Click here for pdf of newsletter announcement.](#)