

Breaking News! US House Actions on Lyme & TBD: July 9, 1 Passed & 1 Blocked



Congressman
Christopher
Smith (NJ)

Congressman Christopher Smith (R-NJ-04) has been pushing for funding and recognition of Lyme and tick-borne diseases over the past 27 years. On July 9, 2019, Mr. Smith testified before the [Committee on Rules](#) and introduced two amendments relating to Lyme and tick-borne diseases to the [Defense Authorization Bill](#) (National Defense Appropriations Act).

ONE PASSED RULES COMMITTEE

Congressman Smith's first [amendment #321](#) directs the Inspector General of the Department of Defense to initiate an investigation into the Department's possible involvement in the bioweaponization of ticks and other insects. The amendment and requested investigation was inspired by information revealed in Lyme survivor Kris Newby's new book, "Bitten: The Secret History of Lyme disease and Biological Weapons." **This amendment was made in order by the Committee (passed by voice vote) and will be scheduled for a vote later this week, in consideration with the full NDAA legislation.**

Update: On July 12 the US House of Representatives voted to

pass amendment #321 directing the Inspector General of the Department of Defense to “conduct a review of whether the Department of Defense experimented with ticks and other insects regarding use as a biological weapon between the years of 1950 and 1975 (source rollcall.com).”

Various media throughout the U.S. and in the U.K published news of Amendment #321:

House orders Pentagon to say if it weaponized ticks and released them – rollcall.com

“We need to find out: is there anything in this research that was supposedly done that can help us to find information that is germane to patient health and combating the spread of the disease.” – Pat Smith, President of Lyme Disease Association in CQ Roll All and The Sun (UK)

Pentagon ordered to reveal to Congress if its scientists used diseased TICKS as biological weapons – and if any escaped the lab – thesun.co.uk

Did Pentagon turn ticks into bioweapons that spread Lyme Disease? N.J. congressman wants answers – nj.com

“We know that the government was doing other kinds of experiments during that time,” said Pat Smith, president of the Jackson, N.J.-based group. “Absolutely it needs to be looked at. The public needs to know if this has occurred.” – Pat Smith in nj.com

[Video](#): Did the Pentagon’s weaponization of ticks lead to the spread of Lyme disease? foxnews.com

House calls for investigation into whether Pentagon tried to weaponize ticks – thehill.com

House of Representatives orders Pentagon to investigate whether ticks were once used as biological weapons – cnn.com

House passes amendment ordering Pentagon to review whether U.S. experimented with weaponizing ticks – cbsnews.com

House orders Pentagon to review if it exposed Americans to weaponised ticks – theguardian.com (UK)

Did the US Invent Lyme Disease in the 1960s? The House Aims to Find Out – defenseone.com

Lyme disease as war weapon? Rep. Chris Smith's push for probe advances after call for Trump to investigate – Asbury Park Press, app.com

Pentagon Ordered to Tell Congress If It Weaponized Ticks And Released Them Into the Public – gizmodo.com

Did the U.S. Invent Lyme Disease in the 1960s? The House Aims to Find Out – govexec.com

Did the Pentagon weaponize ticks with Lyme disease? Congress wants to know – deseretnews.com

Lawmakers pass measure to investigate if ticks were used as bioweapons – daytondailynews.com

Kris Newby responds to Telford's criticism of BITTEN – lymedisease.org

The 'Swiss Agent': Long-forgotten research unearths new mystery about Lyme disease – <https://www.statnews.com/2016/10/12/swiss-agent-lyme-disease-mystery>

STAT, an internet publication and affiliate of the Boston Globe, published an article on October 12, 2016, by Charles Piller, which focused on Swiss-born scientist, Willy Burgdorfer, who discovered the Lyme pathogen/spirochete (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) in 1981. STAT obtained documents of

Burgdorfer's after his death in 2014, that indicated a different pathogen was involved in Lyme disease – *Rickettsia helvetica*, aka *the Swiss Agent*, which he discovered in Switzerland in 1978. This pathogen was infecting people in Connecticut and Long Island in the late 1970s. "And scientists who worked with Burgdorfer, and reviewed key portions of the documents at STAT's request, said the bacteria might still be sickening an unknown number of Americans today." Burgdorfer's documents also suggest regret that he never followed up on the Swiss Agent.

CONGRESSMAN SMITH'S SECOND AMENDMENT WAS BLOCKED

[Amendment #322](#) directs the Secretary of Defense to work with the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a whole-of-government strategy on Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases infecting members of the Armed Forces and civilians. **This second amendment was blocked by Democrats on the Committee in a [party-line vote](#), and will not move to the House floor for a vote at this time. [See Motion & votes from Rules Record Vote #151](#)**

See votes below. If your legislator blocked, contact him/her and tell them unacceptable! We need a national strategy to fight Lyme.

Yes to pass

Tom Cole (R-4-OK) Ranking Member

Rob Woodall (R-7-GA)

Michael C. Burgess (R-26-TX)

Debbie Lesko (R-8-AZ)

No (Blocked)

Jim McGovern (D-2-MA) Chair

Norma Torres (D-35-CA)

Ed Perlmutter (D-7-CO)

Jamie Raskin (D-8_MD)

Mary Gay Scanlon (D-5-PA)

Joseph Morelle (D-25-NY)

Donna Shalala (D-27-FL)

Mark DeSaulnier (D-11-CA)

June Actions: 2 Smith Amendments Pass House of Representatives, 1 Delgado Passes

Christopher H. Smith's (R-NJ-04) amendment, which was approved (Division C of H.R. 2740), adds \$2 million to the DOD's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) for Tick-Borne Disease Research. The program is currently funded at \$5 million.

Mr. Smith's other amendment, adopted on June 12th, will increase funding for Lyme disease research at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for FY 2020. He had testified in March 2019 before the House panel that oversees the CDC, and pushed for an increase from the base \$11 million to \$15 million at the CDC for Lyme. After his testimony, the committee boosted the funding to \$13 million. [Click here for Chris Smith Press Release](#)

Another amendment which then passed was introduced by Antonio Delgado (D-NY-19). It provided \$1million to CDC for FY 2020—bringing CDC total to \$14 million. [Click here for Antonio Delgado Press Release](#)
