

Nov. 14: HHS Tick-Borne Disease Working Group Announces Release of Report to Congress; Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Announces Higher than Ever Lyme Disease Cases

Two major releases from the US Government today confirm what advocates and patients have long known – there is a growing Lyme & tick-borne diseases problem sweeping the land and Congress needs to take action to curb the spread.



In a release long awaited by the Lyme community, the US Department of Health & Human Services announced today that the federal Tick-Borne Disease Working Group (WG) issued its first report to Congress, the Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Services, and the public—with 2 more reports to follow over the next four years.

Recommendations to Congress include improvement in diagnosis & treatment including new rapid & accurate tests; development of antibiotic combinations and/or therapeutic options for acute and persistent illness; strengthening national surveillance; pathogen-host interaction; federal strategic plan development; funding for TBD; and effects of TBD on national security/service members/veterans/families.

According to Lyme Disease Association, Inc. (LDA) President Pat Smith—one of the 14 members of the Working Group—speaking on behalf of the LDA, “Patients and advocates have waited decades for a government report that contains insights from Lyme patients/family members and advocates as this report does, both from WG members and from the public at large. The report is a first step to unlocking the political gridlock surrounding tick-borne diseases, particularly Lyme.”

She added, “Many of us are horrified that after 45 years of Lyme disease, new generations of babies continue to become infected and not receive the proper diagnosis and treatment needed to prevent lifelong suffering. Now this document, prepared using expert and “real world” input, will be used to inform Congress so they can act to provide the necessary funds to stop this tick-borne disease epidemic sweeping our country.”

[Click here for Working Group Press Release](#)

[Click here for Working Group Report to Congress](#) (Click on “2018 TBDWG Report to HHS Secretary and Congress – PDF”)

[Click here for story on report & new CDC numbers](#)

[Click here for Congressman Chris Smith’s Press Release](#)

[Click here for Asbury Park Press – Lyme Disease: Federal panel recommends testing overhaul, more changes to Congress](#)

CDC Report on Case Numbers

In a separate release by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) on the state of tick-borne diseases in the US, CDC introduced its new platform for reporting Lyme disease statistics. The release indicates that there has been an increase in all tick-borne diseases, not just Lyme disease, and that it is the highest total annual number of Lyme cases ever reported at 42,743 cases, and a total of all reported tick-borne diseases of 59,349, which includes Lyme,

anaplasmosis/ehrlichiosis, spotted fever rickettsiosis, babesiosis, tularemia, and Powassan virus.

The Lyme Disease Association, Inc. reminds the public that Lyme is underreported by a factor of 10, therefore, 427,430 cases of Lyme disease probably occurred in 2017 in the U.S. alone.

[Click here for CDC Report](#)