

URGENT: The Tick Act Needs Your Help Now!

TO: Advocates/Patients

FROM: Lyme Disease Association, Inc. Pat Smith, President, 11-20-19

RE: Urgent & Immediate Help Needed

(Click for easy [Steps to Take](#) or See Below)



ISSUE: On October 31, the Senate Tick Act (Collins, ME) was passed out of the Senate HELP Committee; however, it was a different bill than the one that was originally submitted to the Senate Committee that many Lyme groups supported. The HELP committee replaced it in its entirety with a Manager's Amendment, submitted "in the nature of a substitute," which still keeps the same bill number, S-1657, and it was renamed the *Kay Hagan Tick Act*.

The Senate bill has always been a vector-borne disease bill, meaning that mosquito-borne diseases such as Zika and West Nile virus, as well as other vector-borne diseases, are included and eligible to receive monies. There were safeguards in the original Senate bill that would have ensured that Lyme received the funding it warrants, for example, monies would be allocated proportionately according to disease burden in the US. Those safeguards have been removed. The LDA was not aware of the bill substitution and now has been urgently working to assess—before it goes to the full Senate— what these significant bill changes mean, and the potential impact on what the bill does.

[Explanation of Tick Act Changes From the Lyme Disease Association & How To Help](#)

LDA ASSESSMENT & ACTION: We need to take several actions to try to minimize the impact of the changes on the Senate bill. LDA is working with Senator Susan Collins' office and with Congressman Chris Smith's office to try to rectify this language situation to provide necessary safeguards to ensure Lyme will get its appropriate share of the funds that are included in this new Senate bill.

WHAT CAN BE DONE BY YOU: The House version of the Tick Act, HR3073 (Smith, NJ) **retains the original language that the Senate bill used to have.** We want to ensure that the *Smith* House version of the Tick Act gets more co-sponsors so we have another possible route to passage. We need your help now with the action below.

ACTION FOR YOU TO TAKE: We have provided the list of current co-sponsors of the Smith House bill, HR 3073, below, which contains the original Senate language. If your Congressman/woman is **NOT** on the co-sponsor list, we need you to contact him/her immediately.

[STEPS TO TAKE](#)

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Step #1: [Click here](#) to review the current list of co-sponsors of the HR 3073, Tick Act, in the House of Representatives. If your Congressperson is **NOT** on the [current co-sponsor list](#):

- **Go to Step #2**
- If your Congressman **IS** on the list as a co-sponsor, but you would like to call another from your state who is not on the list **Go to Step #2**



Step #2: If you **DO NOT** see your congressperson's name on the list above, please visit [this website](#) to locate his/her contact information, and then:

- **CALL OR EMAIL YOUR CONGRESSPERSON** per the instructions directly below.
- **WHAT TO SAY TO YOUR CONGRESSPERSON:** Contact your House of Representatives' offices and let them know you want them to co-sponsor HR 3073, Tick Act. Explain that it is important that the government develops a strategy for Lyme and tick-borne diseases and authorizes monies to fight this nationwide problem. About 427,000 new cases of Lyme disease occurred in 2017 alone, 20 different tick-borne diseases and conditions are now found in the US, and half of U.S. counties have already been found to harbor ticks that transmit Lyme disease. Thank him/her.
- If your group serves more than one congressional district, contact all Members of Congress in the area you serve with the same message.

LINKS TO THE TICK ACT BILLS:

To see the House bill, HR 3073, Tick Act, [click here](#).

To see the original version of Senate bill, S-1657, [click here](#).

To see the new version of Senate bill, S-1657/*Kay Kagan Tick Act*, that was passed through the HELP Committee, [click here](#).

Thank You!