



Proclamation

By the Governor of Alabama

WHEREAS, Lyme disease is an infectious disease caused by spirochetal bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Scientists have identified more strains and species of *Borrelia burgdorferi* in the South than in the Northeast. Lyme borreliosis and other tick-borne diseases are seriously under reported across the nation; and

WHEREAS, ticks, the host of Lyme disease, are carried by mice, rabbits, squirrels, deer, birds, and other animals; and

WHEREAS, traditional methods of removing embedded ticks are dangerous and can increase the risk of acquiring the infection. Ticks can be so small and hard to detect that many people who contract Lyme disease do not recall being bitten. Prompt treatment with adequate antibiotic therapy in early stage infection may cure Lyme disease, thereby preventing permanent damage and complications of progressive Lyme disease. In some cases, untreated or inadequately treated Lyme disease can lead to death. Lack of early recognition, diagnosis, and treatment can result in permanent physical damage, therefore many Lyme patients are left disabled; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease can affect the brain, heart, joints, and other body organs, and mimics many other diseases. Some patients do not develop the characteristic rash and symptoms may not appear for months to years following initial infection. Patients are often misdiagnosed with more familiar conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, depression, or psychiatric illness; and

WHEREAS, the science surrounding Lyme and tick-borne diseases is unclear and emerging, and testing may be inaccurate. Citizens and medical providers are encouraged to take all tick-borne diseases seriously; and

WHEREAS, The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has reported a dramatic increase in tick-borne illnesses in Alabama. The ADPH declared multiple counties endemic for Lyme disease in Alabama in 2015 and 2016:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim May 2017, as

Lyme Disease Awareness Month

in the State of Alabama.



Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the
Office of the Governor at the State Capitol in the City
of Montgomery on the 1st day of May 2017.

Kay Ivey
Kay Ivey, Governor