

## 2013-J6123

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION calling on the federal government to reevaluate guidelines and allocate additional funding related to Lyme and tick-borne diseases

WHEREAS, The Senate Majority Coalition Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases was convened on October 8, 2013, to address rising concerns in New York State regarding the outbreak and spread of Lyme and Tick-Borne diseases; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force was charged with examining state and federal efforts to combat the continued spread of these diseases and make recommendations to facilitate improved prevention, diagnosis, and treatment protocols in order to better protect New York residents; and

WHEREAS, In 1986, Lyme disease became a reportable disease in New York; since that time, the number of cases continue to grow at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease is an infection that can affect the skin, joints, nervous system and heart and is caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* that is spread by the bite of an infected tick; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, the CDC reported that each year around 300,000 Americans are diagnosed with Lyme Disease with most cases found in the Northeast; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease and tick-borne diseases are often misdiagnosed, since the symptoms of Lyme disease are common flu-like symptoms, and the trademark red bulls eye rash surrounding the tick bite, only appear in some cases; such signs may appear in the days immediately following the tick bite, but in some cases take years for symptoms to manifest; and

WHEREAS, Left untreated, Lyme disease can cause debilitating symptoms and serious health problems; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease can be treated with antibiotics if caught early;

the disease often goes undetected because it mimics other illnesses or may be misdiagnosed; untreated, Lyme disease can lead to severe heart, neurological, eye, and joint problems because the bacteria can affect many different organs and organ systems; and

WHEREAS, Additional tick-borne diseases have emerged that threaten the health and well-being of New York residents; and

WHEREAS, The Senate Majority Coalition Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases recognizes this epidemic as a pressing public health crisis, and has initiated steps to create a comprehensive statewide response; and

WHEREAS, Uncertainty surrounding the diagnosis and appropriate treatment of Lyme and tick-borne Diseases has divided many in the medical community; the ongoing controversy regarding the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease is not in the best interest of the public and those directly affected by the disease; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control recommendations for the treatment of Lyme and tick-borne diseases are cited by many advocacy groups as inadequate and outdated; the Senate Majority Coalition Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases calls on the CDC to reevaluate current guidelines for the treatment modalities approved for these diseases; and

WHEREAS, Federal funding for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases has been minimal in comparison to other diseases and has not kept pace with the need for research into diagnosis, treatment, and prevention given the number of annual cases; and

WHEREAS, Extensive research and analysis is needed to better understand the disease, develop more effective means of testing and provide for medical treatment protocols based on best practices and updated

research, as well as provide educational campaigns and outreach to the public at large; and

WHEREAS, The Senate Majority Coalition Task Force on Lyme and Tick-

Borne Diseases calls on the federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense, to allocate additional resources to research and prevention in these areas; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to call on the federal government to reevaluate guidelines and allocate additional funding related to Lyme and tick-borne diseases; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the CDC.