



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terry Gipson

I NEED YOUR HELP FIGHTING LYME

[TERRY GIPSON](#) June 4, 2014

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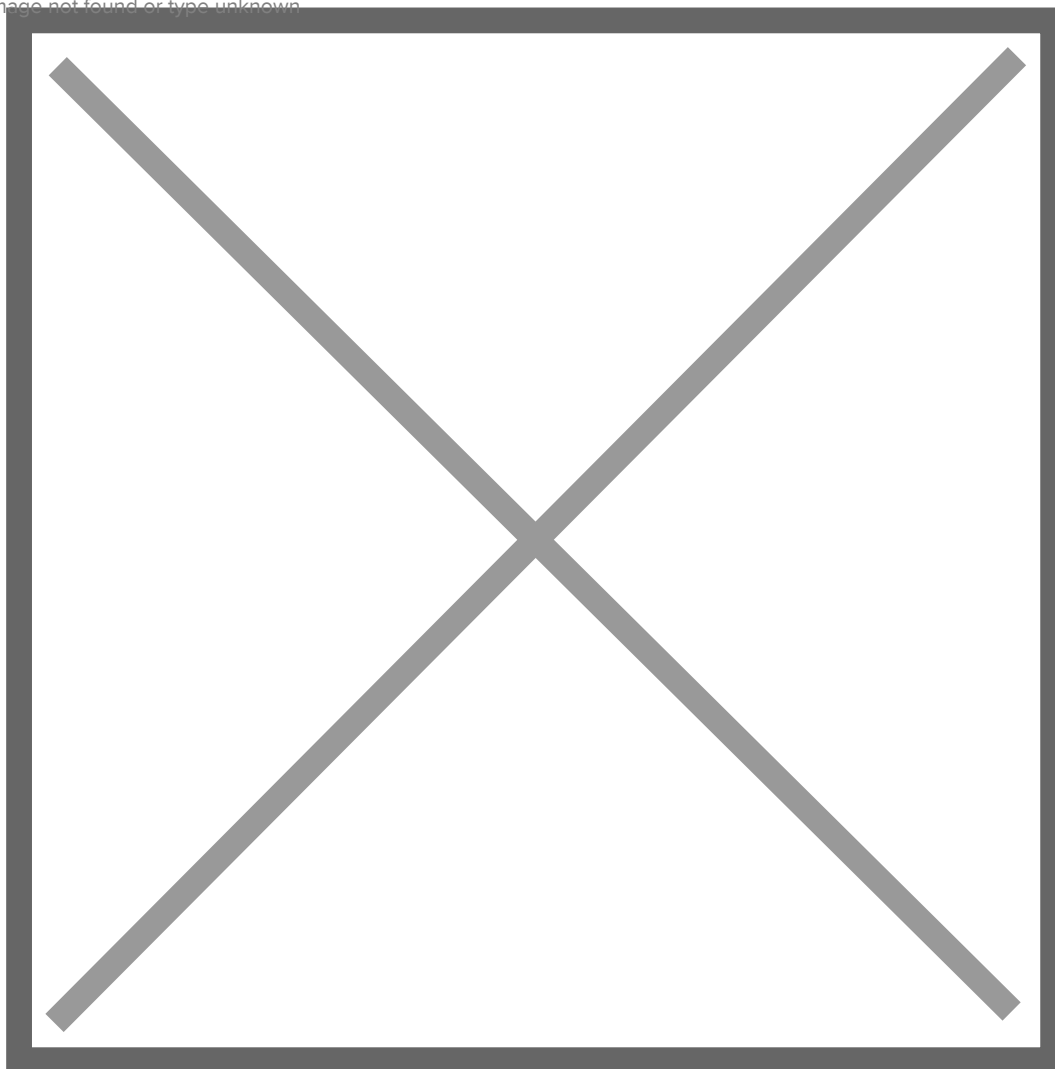
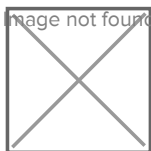
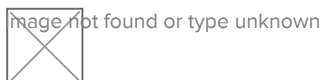


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Dear Friend,

I want to share with you a recently published editorial in the Poughkeepsie Journal, entitled "State must help doctors fight Lyme," which calls on the State Senate Health Committee to move my legislation, S.5520B, to help those suffering from Lyme Disease. My bill would protect a patient's right to be treated by their physician for long-term antibiotic therapy and protect physicians from disciplinary action for such treatment.

The NYS Assembly has unanimously passed the same-as version of the legislation introduced by Assemblywoman Didi Barrett with bipartisan support. The bill is currently assigned to the State Senate Health Committee where it has not been allowed to be voted on in committee. In order for the bill to pass and be sent to Governor Cuomo to be signed into law, it must first be voted out of committee, and then it can be voted on the floor of the State Senate.

The chairman of the State Senate Health Committee is Senator Kemp Hannon. It is completely up to him to release this patient's rights bill to allow a vote in the committee. If you or someone you know has been affected by Lyme Disease please contact Senator Hannon and tell him to move this important legislation, and ask your friends and family to do the same.

To contact Chairman Kemp Hannon, write to The Capitol Room 420, Albany, NY 12247, call 518-455-2200, or email hannon@nysenate.gov.

Tell him your story and that:

Since this bill, S.5520B, was passed unanimously and with bipartisan support in the Assembly, he, as Chairman of the Health Committee must allow this bill to be voted on in committee so it may be sent to the floor for a vote in the Senate. There is no good reason to prevent this bill from being debated and voted on by all our NYS Representatives.

Lyme knows no political stripes, and New York State must do everything they can to help those suffering from this serious health crisis.

Poughkeepsie Journal Editorial: "State must help doctors fight Lyme"

Published May 29, 2014

With precious time remaining, state senators must see the wisdom of joining their Assembly colleagues in helping those suffering from Lyme disease but, in some cases, can't even get help from their doctors.

The situation is outrageous; it can be fixed.

The state Assembly, in fact, has passed a bill that would empower physicians to prescribe long-term antibiotic therapy to a patient with symptoms of chronic Lyme disease. But the bill has not yet cleared the Senate Health Committee, part of the process to get it to full-floor vote. The chairman of that committee, Kemp Hannon, R-Garden City, Nassau County, must see the wisdom of taking prompt action. Two local senators — Greg Ball, R-Patterson, and William Larkin, R-Cornwall-on-Hudson — also serve on that committee and should use their influence to see this legislation get through the process.

This bill was passed unanimously in the Assembly and, about a decade ago, legislation with similar intent made it through both legislative chambers but was vetoed by then-Gov. George Pataki.

Lyme patients deserve far more support. Many of these patients have been dealing with serious health problems, including damage to the nervous system.

Specifically, the bill — sponsored by Didi Barrett, D-Hudson, in the Assembly and being sponsored by Terry Gipson, D-Rhinebeck, in the Senate — would halt the stifling scenario of having physicians face disciplinary actions from the state for treating patients who show symptoms of Lyme disease but test negative. As Assembly Health Committee Chairman Richard N. Gottfried noted during the passage of the bill in the Assembly, "Lyme is an extremely complex illness to test for, and symptoms vary among patients."

Despite repeated pleas, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been reluctant to sanction more aggressive treatments for chronic Lyme disease. But it's become perfectly clear that doctors should be given more leeway to, in consultation with their patients, make medical judgments without fear of an unwarranted investigation by insurers and licensing boards.

The state must take these final steps on behalf of suffering patients who need not only reasons to hope but doctors freed to carry out their work.

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Sincerely,

Terry Gipson

New York State Senator, 41st District

P.S. Please "LIKE" my page on [Facebook](#) to stay connected on our work ahead.
