



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Legislation O'Mara co-sponsors to strengthen response to Lyme and tick-borne diseases gains Legislature's approval: Legislation follows recommendations of Senate Task Force

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 25, 2018

| ISSUE: **LYME AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES**



**Albany, N.Y., June 25**—The New York State Legislature has given final legislative approval to legislation co-sponsored by Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), a member of the Senate Task Force on Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases (TBDs), to strengthen New York State's response to the rise of these diseases.

The measures now go to Governor Andrew Cuomo for final action.

“We’ve taken important actions over the past few years to broaden the state’s overall response to the spread of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, but much more needs to be done, particularly in the areas of reporting, testing and treatment, and education and awareness. These pieces of legislation would greatly strengthen New York’s long-term strategy and I urge Governor Cuomo to sign them into law,” said O’Mara.

The approved legislation would:

- > require the state to conduct an impact study considering how infectious diseases and blood-borne pathogens, including Lyme and TBDs, may have correlations with mental illness in infected individuals. The new “Mental Health Impacts Report” would enable better treatment of the mental health consequences associated with these infections (**S7171**); and
- > establish an expert-based Lyme and TBDs Working Group to review current best practices for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of Lyme and TBDs (**S7170**).

O’Mara said that the actions are part of the Senate’s latest, comprehensive legislative package representing recommendations first made in a Task Force report released last October, “Ticking Time Bomb: An Update on the Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Epidemic in New York State.”

The full Senate report is attached above.