



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

SERINO URGES ALBANY TO FUND LYME DISEASE PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AWARENESS INITIATIVES

SUSAN SERINO June 11, 2019

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



ALBANY, NY—Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) today released the statement below following the passage of a bill to create a public awareness campaign on Lyme and tick-borne diseases (TBDs) specifically geared toward the agricultural community (S.5873):

“In 2016, we chaptered a similar bill—with unanimous support in both houses of the Legislature—to create a statewide public awareness campaign on Lyme and TBDs, and each year, we included funding in the budget to support important prevention, education and awareness activities.

While I appreciate the specific focus this bill places on New York's farmers and agricultural community who we know are particularly vulnerable, actions speak louder than words, and I urge Albany's new leaders to actually put funding behind these important initiatives.

Critical funding to help raise awareness, and combat the spread of Lyme and TBDs, was left out of this year's state budget, and it is especially important in relation to this particular bill. Last week, I attended the public hearing on suicide prevention in Albany where witnesses testified to the fact that many in our rural communities do not have broadband access. A lot of our awareness initiatives are done online, because it can be the most cost effective medium. However, in these communities especially, we know we need to do more to bridge the gap between available resources and those who need to access them, and we need the funding to be able to do that more effectively.

It is important that we show New Yorkers we can come together to effectively address this problem which is why I support this bill, but also why, once again, I am urging Albany's new leaders to go beyond the rhetoric and take real action to help stop the spread of Lyme and TBDs by finding a way to fund these critically important initiatives. Too many New Yorkers are suffering and we simply cannot afford to take steps backwards in this fight."