

**2015 -- S 1030**

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LC002985  
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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015**

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**SENATE RESOLUTION**

**RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO  
REPORT ON LYME DISEASE**

Introduced By: Senators Sheehan, Sosnowski, Miller, Ottiano, and Algieri

Date Introduced: June 25, 2015

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1           WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a bacterial illness that is spread by tick bites. According to  
2 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is the most commonly reported illness resulting  
3 from an insect bite in the United States. In 2013, it was the fifth most common Nationally  
4 Notifiable disease. However, this disease does not occur nationwide and is concentrated heavily  
5 in the Northeast and upper Midwest; and

6           WHEREAS, The threat of Lyme disease is serious and growing and has become an  
7 important public health problem; and

8           WHEREAS, Lyme disease is a major concern among Rhode Islanders, who are six to  
9 eight times more likely to contract the disease compared to the national average. Due to the lack  
10 of predators, there is an overpopulation of deer in Rhode Island, which are host species for ticks;  
11 and

12           WHEREAS, Children between the ages of five to nine are the most likely to get Lyme  
13 disease in Rhode Island; and

14           WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control has recently estimated that for every known  
15 case of Lyme disease, there are about nine unreported cases; and

16           WHEREAS, The chronic health conditions diagnosed as Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue  
17 and autoimmune diseases share many similar symptoms with Lyme disease. The correct  
18 diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease is essential to help a patient recover without a lifetime of  
19 medications and suffering; and

1           WHEREAS, The Department of Health is charged with the prevention and control of  
2 disease that is harmful to the public health and with providing advice to the General Assembly on  
3 matters related to public health; now, therefore be it

4           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
5 hereby respectfully requests that the Rhode Island Department of Health report to the Senate  
6 President and the Chairs of the Senate Committees on Environment and Agriculture, Health and  
7 Human Services, and Government Oversight by January 31, 2016, on the following: (1) An  
8 overview of the current levels of Lyme disease in Rhode Island; (2) The response of the medical  
9 community in treating the disease; (3) An analysis of best practices in the treatment of the  
10 disease; (4) Identifying any gaps in coverage or insurance protocols that affect access to  
11 comprehensive and adequate treatment; and (5) The department's current and long-term goals and  
12 strategies to address the high incidence of the disease in the state; and be it further

13           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
14 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Gina Raimondo, Governor of the  
15 State of Rhode Island, and the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health, Nicole  
16 Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH.

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