

Bill Summary

COMMITTEE: Banking and Insurance

DATE: 10/15/12

PRIME SPONSOR: Hess

BILL NO: HB 272

PREPARED BY: Anne Achenbach

PRINTER'S NO: 4139

A. Synopsis:

HB 272 establishes the Lyme and Related Tick-Borne Disease Surveillance, Education, Prevention and Treatment Act.

B. Summary:

This bill directs the Department of Health (DOH) to establish a Task Force to investigate and make recommendations to DOH regarding the education, prevention and treatment of Lyme disease and related tick-borne diseases. Under the bill, DOH would also develop an active tick surveillance program in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). HB 272 also requires health care policies to cover certain antibiotic therapies.

The Task Force established under the bill would:

- Meet on a quarterly basis
- Develop a program of public and professional information and education regarding Lyme disease to include the broad spectrum of scientific and treatment options for all stages of Lyme disease.
- Work in cooperation with the PA Game Commission, The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Department of Education, DEP and the Department of Entomology at the PA State University, to disseminate information on Lyme disease to the general public

The bill would direct DEP to develop an active tick collection, testing and surveillance program to provide a better understanding of the range of tick-borne diseases, geographic hot spots and levels of infectivity to be used in prevention and education efforts.

Under HB 272, all health care policies would be required to cover prescribed treatment for Lyme disease and related tick-borne diseases as prescribed by the patient's attending physician.

DOH is directed to identify and apply for public and private grants and funding in order to carry out this act.