



MEMORANDUM IN OPPOSITION

Bill Number: S.5520 (Gipson)/ A.7702 (Barrett)

Requires health insurers to provide coverage for long term medical care for Lyme disease and other tick borne related pathogens; establishes educational measures and the tick borne illness research, detection and education fund.

The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care is the largest, single-issue grassroots coalition in New York State. Our members include more than 3,000 small and medium-sized businesses representing more than 150,000 working New Yorkers.

WE OPPOSE THIS MANDATE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- Roughly 177,000 individuals contract Lyme disease each year. Chronic treatment of this condition can cost upwards of \$16,000 per patient annually.
- This is an overly-broad, open-ended proposal that is both costly and repetitive. New York already provides standard coverage of antibiotics and treatments.
- Tests for this disease are unreliable. Experts agree that variations of the conditions can be misdiagnosed, which could result in unnecessary, and costly treatment, for healthcare consumers.
- Medically-necessary treatments for conditions resulting from a Lyme infection, i.e., arthritis, area already covered.
- This bill not only hurts consumers, but INCREASES taxpayer costs also --- Beginning in 2016, the state government (taxpayers) are responsible for paying the added costs to small business on any mandate that is not included in federal health care's basic benefits package.
- Before adopting any additional health insurance mandates, the Legislature must first seat and utilize the Health Care Quality and Cost Containment Commission. Established in 2007, this body will study the cost and medical efficacy of health insurance proposal prior to passage.

For these reasons, we ask you to OPPOSE S.5520/ A.7702

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