



Proclamation

By the Governor of Alabama

*WHEREAS, Lyme disease is an infectious disease caused by spirochetal bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Scientists have identified more strains and species of *Borrelia burgdorferi* in the South than in the Northeast. Lyme borreliosis and other tick-borne diseases are seriously under reported across the nation; and*

WHEREAS, ticks, the host of Lyme disease, are carried by mice, rabbits, squirrels, deer, birds and other animals; and

WHEREAS, traditional methods of removing embedded ticks are dangerous and can increase the risk of acquiring the infection. Ticks can be so small and hard to detect that many people who contract Lyme disease do not recall being bitten. Prompt treatment with adequate antibiotic therapy in the early stage of the infection may cure Lyme disease, thereby preventing permanent damage and complications of progressive Lyme disease. In some cases, untreated or inadequately treated Lyme disease can lead to death. Lack of early recognition, diagnosis and treatment can result in permanent physical damage; therefore, many Lyme patients are left disabled; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease can affect the brain, heart, joints and other body organs, and mimics many other diseases. Some patients do not develop the characteristic rash and symptoms may not appear for months to years following initial infection. Patients are often misdiagnosed with more familiar conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, depression or psychiatric illness; and

WHEREAS, the science surrounding Lyme and other tick-borne diseases is unclear and emerging, while testing may be inaccurate. Citizens and medical providers are encouraged to take all tick-borne diseases seriously; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has reported a dramatic increase in tick-borne illnesses in Alabama over the past several years;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim May 2018, as

Lyme Disease Awareness Month

in the State of Alabama and encourage our citizens to become better educated about this illness and how to protect themselves from infection.



Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the
Office of the Governor at the State Capitol in the
City of Montgomery on the 30th day of April 2018.

Kay Ivey
Kay Ivey, Governor