



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses are found across the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, ticks, the vector of Lyme disease, are carried by birds and animals and are frequently encountered by Tennessee citizens; and

WHEREAS, scientists have identified more strains and species of the Lyme spirochetal bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* in the Southeastern United States than in any other region of the country; and

WHEREAS, the ticks may be so small and hard to detect that many people who contract tick-borne diseases do not recall being bitten by a tick; and

WHEREAS, proper and timely tick removal methods decrease the risk of becoming infected with a tick-borne disease; and

WHEREAS, tests are still being refined and results may be inaccurate; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has consistently cautioned medical professionals and citizens that the CDC's case definition used to report Lyme disease should not be used for clinical diagnosis, as many people may not meet reporting criteria but yet be infected; and

WHEREAS, early recognition and treatment with adequate antibiotic therapy in early stage infection may cure tick-borne diseases preventing permanent damage and complications; and

WHEREAS, inadequate treatment or no treatment of tick-borne illnesses may lead to death or permanent disability; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease can affect the brain, heart, joints, and other organs of the body often mimicking other illnesses; and

WHEREAS, all symptoms following tick bites should be taken seriously; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease may become more difficult to treat when diagnosis and treatment are delayed; and

WHEREAS, the best protection from becoming seriously ill with Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases is education about ticks, the diseases they carry, proper protection and prevention;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Haslam, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim the month of May, 2018 as

Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Awareness Month

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this ninth day of April, 2018.

Handwritten signature of Bill Haslam in blue ink.

Governor

Handwritten signature of Sue Hergett in blue ink.

Secretary of State

