PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information ***cannot*** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Inform Persons of the Options for the Treatment of Lyme Disease

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §1646 is enacted to read:

§ 1646. Lyme disease testing information disclosure

1. Definition. For the purposes of this section, "health care provider" means a physician, hospital or person that is licensed or otherwise authorized in this State to provide health care services.

2. Lyme disease testing information disclosure. Every health care provider that orders a laboratory test for the presence of Lyme disease shall provide the patient with a copy of the results of the test.

Sec. 2. Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention; alternatives for treatment of Lyme disease. The Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall include on the publicly accessible website established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 1645, subsection 3 the following information regarding Lyme disease diagnosis and treatment:

1. Lyme disease may be difficult to diagnose and treat;

2. Some patients seem not to respond to the usual antibiotics used for treating Lyme disease and seem to have post-treatment Lyme disease syndrome. There are some doctors who believe that longer doses of antibiotics may sometimes be helpful. Some patients believe that they have benefited from extended treatments of antibiotics;

3. Antibiotics can be lifesaving medications but can have serious side effects, such as the development of drug-resistant organisms. A patient who contracts an infection from a drug-resistant organism may never fully recover;

4. A negative result for a Lyme disease test does not necessarily mean that Lyme disease is not present and if symptoms continue, the patient should contact a health care provider and inquire about the appropriateness of retesting or additional treatment; and

5. Information on treatment alternatives for treating Lyme disease is available through Internet websites of organizations, including, but not limited to, MaineLyme, Lyme Disease Association, the Mayo Clinic, the National Institutes of Health and WebMD.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 126th Legislature, First Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.