

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
**MASSACHUSETTS SENATE**  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

**Anne M. Gobi**  
**STATE SENATOR**

Worcester, Hampden,  
Hampshire & Middlesex

Tel. (617) 722-1540

Fax (617) 722-1078

E-Mail: Anne.Gobi@masenate.gov

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Wednesday, June 01, 2016**

**CONTACT: Brian Ferrarese**  
**PHONE: 617-722-1540**

### **Gobi, Senate Pass Lyme Disease Coverage Budget Amendment**

**BOSTON – Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer)** has announced that on Thursday the Massachusetts Senate passed a budget amendment providing long term coverage for Lyme disease treatment. There were 5,050 new reported cases of Lyme disease in Massachusetts in 2012, the highest incidence rate in Massachusetts history.

“As cases of Lyme disease balloon statewide, we need to do everything we can to make sure Massachusetts residents are provided with proper coverage for the treatment they need,” said Senator Gobi. “I was happy to work with my colleagues on this important initiative.”

Lyme disease is the largest vector-borne disease in the United States, affecting more individuals than Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and the West Nile virus combined. Often misdiagnosed because symptoms are similar to the flu, sufferers of Lyme disease can suffer long term, chronic symptoms, including rash, fever, chills, body aches, joint pain and neurological problems.

The legislation requires all private insurance plans in Massachusetts to cover Lyme disease testing and proper treatment. Currently insurance companies restrict coverage to 28 days, which leaves some patients paying thousands of dollars out of pocket. The cost to insurance premiums would be negligible. According to the state Cost Containment Committee, increasing coverage for Lyme disease antibiotics from 28 days to 18 months would only cost an average of 3 cents per premium.

The budget now goes to conference committee to negotiate differences. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Henry Kahn in Senator Gobi’s office at 617-722-1540.

####