County Health Officials of New York

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OPPOSES

S.2168-A

(Serino)

AN ACT TO AMEND THE INSURANCE LAW, IN RELATION TO MEETINGS AND REPORTS OF THE NEW YORK HEALTH CARE QUALITY AND COSCT CONTAINMENT COMMISSION

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) opposes, as written, the above-referenced legislation. The bill includes language requiring a commission to consider the impact on health insurance costs and quality of legislation requiring coverage of long-term and chronic Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. The inclusion of chronic Lyme disease is an item that NYSACHO cannot support, as there is no scientific evidence to support the existence of chronic Lyme disease and the treatment for chronic Lyme disease is inappropriate.

The treatment of patients with protracted antibiotic courses has no evidence of effectiveness, and can be dangerous. Unnecessary antibiotics used for extended periods of time put patients at risk. The antibiotics kill beneficial bacteria and allows for antibiotic-resistant bacteria to dominate. Patients have died as a result of receiving long-term and inappropriate courses of intravenous antibiotics leading to septic shock.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has called antibiotic resistance "one of the biggest threats to global health, food security, and development today" and while antibiotic resistance occurs naturally, the misuse of antibiotics is accelerating the process. Long-term courses of intravenous antibiotics are the type of misuse of that contribute to antibiotic resistant bacteria.

Due to the lack of scientific evidence to support the existence of chronic Lyme disease, and the lack of evidence to support that protracted antibiotic course have effectiveness, it would be inappropriate for insurance companies to pay for this treatment and creating a commission on chronic Lyme disease would further raise public misconceptions.

NYSACHO, therefore, must oppose this bill.

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