

August 13, 2018

To the Honorable Members of  
The Illinois House of Representatives,  
100th General Assembly:

Today, I return House Bill 4515 with specific recommendations for change. This legislation creates a number of resources to advise and educate state regulatory bodies and the public on the evolving research and best practices concerning Lyme disease prevention and treatment. These important initiatives will address this growing public health concern and equip Illinoisans and health care professionals with the best possible information as it becomes available.

However, the bill also creates a disciplinary exemption for physicians who prescribe experimental treatments for Lyme disease or other tick-borne illnesses, including the prescription of long-term antibiotic treatment. This exemption from the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation's disciplinary oversight of physicians is very concerning. It shields physicians from discipline for prescribing a therapy that rigorous scientific research has been found to be harmful and even fatal. Importantly, this is a treatment that the medical community, including the U.S. Center for Disease Control and the Infectious Disease Society of America, do not recommend.

I appreciate the intent and hard work of those advocating for change on this issue. Therefore, I have instructed the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Responsibility to enact all aspects of this bill but for those that exempt physicians from medical discipline.

In order to promote prevention and awareness of Lyme disease, the Illinois Department of Public Health shall enact the following:

- (1) Establish the Lyme Disease Task Force consistent with the membership, duties, and responsibilities set forth in this bill;
- (2) Create a designated webpage with publicly accessible and up-to-date information about the prevention, detection, and treatment of Lyme disease;

- (3) Announce government guidance and recommendations of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Guideline Clearinghouse under the Department of Health and Human Services, and any other persons or entities determined by the Lyme Disease Task Force to have particular expertise on Lyme disease;
- (4) Share information for physicians, other health care professionals and providers, and other persons subject to an increased risk of contracting Lyme disease;
- (5) Make public educational materials on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses for physicians and other health care professionals and providers in multiple formats; and
- (6) Publicize peer-reviewed scientific research articles.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(e) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 4515, entitled "AN ACT concerning regulation," with the following specific recommendations for change:

By deleting page 8, line 6 through page 24, line 12.

With these changes, House Bill 4515 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner  
GOVERNOR