

# SENATE BILL 557

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CF HB 660

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By: **Senator Eckardt**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2019

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Health – Tick–Borne Disease Interagency Workgroup**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Tick–Borne Disease Interagency Workgroup;  
4 providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Workgroup; requiring the  
5 Workgroup to hold certain meetings; prohibiting a member of the Workgroup from  
6 receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain  
7 expenses; requiring the Workgroup to solicit input from certain stakeholders and  
8 study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the  
9 Workgroup to submit an interim and a final report to certain committees of the  
10 General Assembly on or before certain dates; providing for the termination of this  
11 Act; and generally relating to the Tick–Borne Disease Interagency Workgroup.

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

13 That:

14 (a) There is a Tick–Borne Disease Interagency Workgroup.

15 (b) The Workgroup consists of the following members:

16 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of  
17 the Senate;

18 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the  
19 House;

20 (3) the Secretary of Health, or the Secretary’s designee;

21 (4) the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Secretary’s designee;

22 (5) the Secretary of the Environment, or the Secretary’s designee;

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (6) the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee;

2 (7) one representative of the University of Maryland Agricultural Research  
3 Center;

4 (8) one representative of the University of Maryland Global Leadership  
5 Council;

6 (9) seven members, appointed by the Secretary of Health, representing:

7 (i) health care providers with experience diagnosing and treating  
8 tick-borne diseases;

9 (ii) scientists or researchers with expertise in tick-borne diseases;

10 (iii) patients with tick-borne diseases and their family members; and

11 (iv) nonprofit organizations that advocate for patients with  
12 tick-borne diseases; and

13 (10) representatives of other State agencies, the Johns Hopkins School of  
14 Public Health, the University of Maryland Medical System, and the Maryland Hospital  
15 Association, as determined by the Secretary of Health.

16 (c) The members of the Workgroup described in subsection (b)(9) and (10) of this  
17 section shall represent a diversity of scientific disciplines and views.

18 (d) The Secretary of Health shall designate the chair of the Workgroup.

19 (e) The Maryland Department of Health shall provide staff for the Workgroup.

20 (f) The Workgroup shall meet at least twice annually.

21 (g) A member of the Workgroup:

22 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but

23 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State  
24 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

25 (h) The purpose of the Workgroup is to provide subject matter expertise and to  
26 review activities of federal and State agencies related to tick-borne diseases to ensure  
27 interagency coordination, minimize overlap, and examine research priorities.

28 (i) The Workgroup shall:

29 (1) review:

1 (i) ongoing tick-borne disease research, including research related  
2 to causes, prevention, treatment, surveillance, diagnosis, duration of illness, and  
3 intervention for individuals with tick-borne diseases; and

4 (ii) federal and State activities related to tick-borne diseases,  
5 including:

6 1. epidemiological activities;

7 2. basic, clinical, and translational tick-borne disease  
8 research related to the pathogenesis, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of tick-borne  
9 diseases; and

10 3. actions undertaken by federal agencies and researchers,  
11 including the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the National  
12 Institutes of Health;

13 (2) solicit input from stakeholders, including organizations representing  
14 patients, health care providers, researchers, and industry, regarding scientific advances,  
15 research questions, surveillance activities, and emerging strains in species of pathogenic  
16 organisms;

17 (3) develop a summary of:

18 (i) the research, activities, and actions reviewed under item (1) of  
19 this subsection, including advances made as a result of the research, and gaps in the  
20 research;

21 (ii) the Workgroup's meetings; and

22 (iii) public comments received by the Workgroup; and

23 (4) make recommendations regarding any appropriate changes, including  
24 improvements, that should be made regarding research and activities regarding tick-borne  
25 diseases.

26 (j) (1) On or before December 1, 2019, the Workgroup shall submit an interim  
27 report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and  
28 Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Health and Government Operations  
29 Committee in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article.

30 (2) On or before December 1, 2020, the Workgroup shall submit a final  
31 report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and  
32 Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Health and Government Operations  
33 Committee in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
2 1, 2019. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of June 30, 2021,  
3 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and  
4 of no further force and effect.