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Senate Unanimously Supports ‘Biting Back’ Against Lyme Disease *Four Bills by Cowles to Address Lyme Disease Pass Senate during Floor Period*

MADISON— Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after the state Senate passed Senate Bills 296, 297, 298 and 300, four bills from the ‘Bite Back’ package to combat Lyme disease in Wisconsin, on a voice vote:

“The problem of Lyme disease is growing and shows no signs of slowing after the annual number of cases has doubled in the past decade. Preventing Lyme disease is not about making people cautious to spend time in Wisconsin’s great outdoors, but instead it’s about educating people on how to prevent tick bites, reminding people to search the body for ticks after time outside, and raising the awareness of the warning signs of Lyme disease to catch more cases early and allow for the better management and treatment of the disease.

“I’ve personally seen the impact that Lyme disease can have on someone’s life and I’ve heard stories about how Lyme disease has impacted other resident’s lives. By approaching the awareness and prevention of Lyme disease through the ‘Bite Back’ package, we can ensure that the Legislature has made a bold first step and fostered continuing discussions to combat Lyme disease and other vector-borne illnesses in our state.”

The ‘Bite Back’ package was introduced earlier this year by Senator Cowles, Representative Jeff Mursau (R-Crivitz), Senator Mark Miller (D-Monona), and Representative Nick Milroy (D-South Range). The four proposals approved by the Senate today include:

- [2019 Senate Bill 296](#): Requires signage that raises awareness of Lyme disease, informs on how to prevent tick bites, and encourages visitors to check for ticks after visits to be posted in common areas of properties in the State Parks System.
- [2019 Senate Bill 297](#): Requires the sale of bug spray, one of the easiest methods to prevent tick bites, in certain state parks and forests when their park or forest office is open and staffed.
- [2019 Senate Bill 298](#): Requires information to raise awareness of Lyme disease, inform on how to prevent tick bites, and encourage people to check for ticks after spending time outdoors to be published in informational brochures at state parks. This legislation also requires that similar information is posted on the DNR’s digital and print platforms in May of each year which is Lyme Disease Awareness Month.
- [2019 Senate Bill 300](#): Establishes a nineteen-member tick-borne disease study committee to create a report for the legislature within 36-months on consensus-based recommendations for changes in our state’s approach to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases.



These four proposals are now available for consideration by the Assembly. These bills accompany two other efforts lead by Senator Cowles that passed the state Senate today. Senator Cowles also joined 15 efforts on the Senate calendar as a co-sponsor, and voted in-favor of a series of other bills and resolutions and over 60 appointments during the October 8th floor session.

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