



WHEREAS, Colorado residents, pets, and visitors are increasingly exposed to tick habitats through work, play, outdoor recreation, and travel, putting them at higher risk of contact with ticks carried by wildlife and domestic animals; and

WHEREAS, tick bites can transmit serious and potentially life-threatening diseases—including Lyme disease, Colorado Tick Fever, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasmosis, Tick-Borne Relapsing Fever, Tick Paralysis, and Alpha-gal syndrome, often causing fever, rash, pain, and other symptoms that resemble many viral illnesses, making diagnosis challenging; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that tick-borne disease cases in the United States more than doubled between 2004 and 2016, accounting for 77 percent of all reported vector-borne diseases, and that Lyme disease can cause serious, life-altering effects including transmission during pregnancy and chronic, often debilitating symptoms such as severe fatigue, pain, cognitive impairment, and memory problems that can dramatically disrupt daily life and persist or recur with varying intensity among individuals; and

WHEREAS, national public health efforts under the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) are intensifying to fight Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses, including a December 15, 2025, HHS roundtable, which brought together patients, clinicians, researchers, lawmakers, and advocates to advance diagnostics, patient-centered care, research, and public-private partnerships like the LymeX Innovation Accelerator to develop next-generation detection tools; and

WHEREAS, participants at the HHS roundtable emphasized urgent needs for improved diagnostics, coordinated care, expanded research into tick-borne disease mechanisms, and inclusive, patient-centered approaches to addressing gaps in knowledge, surveillance, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and access to care; and

WHEREAS, tick-borne diseases in Colorado are identified through public health reporting and surveillance systems, and available data may not fully capture the true burden of illness due to challenges in diagnosis, variability in reporting, symptoms that often resemble other common illnesses, and low public awareness; and

WHEREAS, delays in diagnosis or treatment can result in severe illness, long-term complications, or, in rare cases, even death; and

WHEREAS, prevention, awareness, education, timely evaluation after suspected exposure, and early, accurate treatment are the most effective tools to protect individuals, families, and communities from tick-borne illnesses;

THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby proclaim May, 2026, as

LYME & OTHER TICK-BORNE DISEASES AWARENESS MONTH

in the State of Colorado.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this first day of May, 2026



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor