AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE
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OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY

At the end of subtitle C of title VII of the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. 7. NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT TICK-BORNE DISEASES.

(a) National Strategy.—

(1) In general.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President, acting through the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall develop and submit to Congress a national strategy to address the escalating burden of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases infecting members of the Armed Forces and civilians across the United States.

(2) Elements.—The national strategy under paragraph (1) shall consist of the following:

(A) An initial assessment of the prevalence of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, the progress of the United States in combatting the diseases, challenges impeding progress, and rec-
commendations for improvement and implement-
ation of priority actions based on the assess-
ment.

(B) A annual report that includes—

(i) an evaluation of all Federally-funded efforts at the Department of Defense
and the Department of Health and Human
Services and other Federal agencies re-

(ii) recommendations for priority ac-
tions to improve the prevention, diagnosis,
treatment, and care for those with the dis-
cases; and

(iii) any recommendations for ex-
panded analysis, review and action.

(b) Establishment of Office.—

(1) In general.—The Secretary of Health and
Human Services is authorized to establish within the
Department of Health and Human Services an office
to be known as the National Strategy to Combat
Tick-Borne Diseases Office (in this section referred
to as the “Office”), which shall be headed by a Di-
rector to be appointed by the Secretary (in consultation with the Secretary of Defense).

(2) Responsibilities of Director.—The Director of the Office shall—

(A) oversee the creation and development of the national strategy under subsection (a);

(B) oversee the annual report under subsection (a)(2)(B) and an annual update of the national strategy;

(C) assist the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Defense in carrying out the responsibilities under the national strategy to combat tick-borne diseases in both the military and general populations; and

(D) consult with the Tick-Borne Disease Working Group, the agencies and offices of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense, and other Federal agencies, as appropriate in order to carry out the national strategy and the responsibilities of the Director.

(3) Staff.—The agencies working with the office are authorized to provide staff to the Office on a nonreimbursable basis.
(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The President, acting through the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall have the following responsibilities under this section:

(1) To develop the national strategy under subsection (a) through the Office.

(2) To ensure that national strategy gives priority to diseases that impact members of the Armed Forces and the civilian population of the United States, as determined by measuring the prevalence, incidence, morbidity, mortality, extent of disability, and financial cost of the disease.

(3) To ensure coordination of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases programs and activities across the appropriate agencies and offices of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense.

(4) To advance the development of research, reporting, diagnostic tests, and treatments that would help those infected with Lyme disease or other tick-borne diseases and help to prevent future cases of such diseases.

(5) To certify that individuals with chronic Lyme disease are included in clinical, research, and service efforts.
(6) To ensure solicitation and appropriate integration into the national strategy and agency activities of the perspectives and experiences of patients, and advocates, and treating physicians.

(7) To coordinate with other appropriate Federal agencies and international bodies to integrate and inform the fight against Lyme disease and tick-borne disease globally.