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**Public Health Committee: H.B. 6200**

I have been ill since late childhood. Although I have lived in the tri-state area all of my life, and in Connecticut since I was four, when illness overtook me and began to destroy my life in ways it would take too long to relate here, I could not get an accurate diagnosis of my medical problems. It took well over ten years, in Connecticut, for someone to even suggest testing me for Lyme. I am CDC positive for the disease. Because my treatment was delayed for so long, I have had a poor response to treatment. Still, I keep trying and hope for new treatment protocols.

These protocols, however, will not arrive in the current climate of Lyme denial. Lyme Disease is not confined to our state, or our country, or our continent. It is a worldwide, if despised and invisible, pandemic. Still, it is not surprising that Lyme is most identified with our own State of Connecticut. Connecticut ought to be a beacon to the world in the understanding and treatment of Lyme and associated tick-borne diseases.

Instead, Connecticut is a disgrace. The pandemic is denied and ignored, patients are ridiculed and berated and abandoned to suffering, and the doctors whose ethics command them to bravely care for Lyme patients as best they know how are shunned by the medical community and constantly threatened with license removal.

How did we come to this? Scientific progress towards understanding Lyme and devising better treatments is continually being impeded. Whose interests are being served by refusing to acknowledge these emerging tick-borne diseases? The proposed Bill H.B. 6200 is not nearly enough to help us, but it is a start and must be passed.

Thank you.

Amy J. Blyskal