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Public Health Committee: H.B. 6200
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee:

I'm writing in support of proposed bill 6200, ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF LONG-TERM ANTIBIOTICS FOR THE TREATMENT OF LYME DISEASE.***

This bill is about the freedom of physicians to be able to choose how to treat Lyme on a case-by-case basis. It gives patients the freedom to be able to have their disease treated until they are well, not based on a limited regimen specified by the IDSA.

I was personally misdiagnosed for over a year here in the state of CT. I have suffered terribly as a result of the physical damage caused by Lyme disease. I am one of the unlucky people that had gone too long without treatment so the disease started to attack my central nervous system. It is beyond the scope of this letter to clearly explain the amount of pain I have gone through since being bit by a tiny speckle of a deer tick.

I had to literally leave the state of CT to find a doctor that would treat a patient with late stage Lyme disease. The local hospitals were not trained or equipped with diagnosing or treating such a serious case of tick borne illness. This misdiagnosis is a result of the fear and ignorance of CT state physicians to adequately diagnose and treat all tick borne illnesses. Too many people are now falling in the category of what is termed untreated late stage Lyme disease.

The CT Department of Health has not done anything to help alleviate my suffering. I am forced to travel outside of CT to continue my medical care. This in itself places a serious financial burden on my family. It also compromises my health due to the unnecessary stress associated with the travel, costs, and ability to even get an appointment. There are so many patients traveling outside of CT to get medical care for tick borne illnesses that there is a huge waiting list to actually be seen by a Lyme literate physician.

There are no doctors in my area willing to say that they treat late stage Lyme disease or the co-infections associated with it. I find it beyond disturbing that most physicians have never heard of babesia or bartonella. I do not think the physicians themselves make a conscious decision to hurt patients here in CT. Rather it is caused by the fear of having their medical licenses taken away due to the precedence that the CT Department of Health has set for us all.

We need the state officials to take a stand and help the thousands of patients in CT suffering from Lyme disease. We need new leadership in the CT Department of Health. We need leadership that actually knows how to review clinical research and help the people of this state. We need the CT Department of Health to be held accountable for the thousands of ill people suffering from tick borne illnesses. If the fear was taken away then more physicians would be willing to learn about these illnesses and how to adequately treat them.

Dr. Monica S. Bolesta