



State of Connecticut
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I deeply appreciate the willingness of the Public Health Committee to take on the task of revisiting our statutes regarding Lyme Disease. It is no small job, but one that has consequences to the myriad of those who have had to deal with the debilitating and sometimes long-term effects of the disease. Lyme disease and the state of Connecticut are, of course, closely linked. Our towns gave it its popular name, our state features more outbreaks of the disease than any other and many breakthroughs in its treatment have been made at our universities. Yet under our current statutes doctors are too often constrained from prescribing the best course of treatment for their patients. That's why I've joined with a number of our colleagues in introducing House Bill 5625, *AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF LONG-TERM ANTIBIOTICS FOR THE TREATMENT OF LYME DISEASE*. We have designed this legislation to ensure our state's doctors have the autonomy and protection they need to do what is best for their patients.

I have seen the harm this disease can cause first hand—my mother was unfortunate enough to contract it. I know that thousands in Connecticut have similar stories. But I have also seen firsthand that the disease can be beaten with the proper course of treatment from a doctor who knows what is best for the patient.

Doctors across the country agree that Lyme disease can have lasting effects, and if they diagnose problems in a patient beyond the normal 2-4 week treatment there should be nothing standing in their way. It would be a tragedy if Connecticut allowed this treatable disease to progress to its later stages in some patients, which in the worst cases can include symptoms of psychosis and schizophrenia, simply because we did not have enough trust in the doctors who can stop this disease.

The rest of the country looks to Connecticut as the epicenter of Lyme disease treatment. HB 5625 is a chance to send a message that we must trust the diagnoses doctors make for their patients, and not punish them or their patients when they prove they have documented their decisions and taken the action they believe is best. Let's pass this important legislation and show that we have the confidence in our doctors to give the best service to each and every one of their patients. Thank you.