

Fatima Bell
34 Codfish Hill Road Extension
Bethel, CT 06801

January 24, 2015

Chairs and Members of the Committee on Children:

I am writing this letter to express my support of Raised Bill No. 207, an act concerning funding for a Lyme Disease Prevention and Education Program. The Connecticut Department of Health should be appropriated the sum of \$450,000 to develop and execute a statewide Lyme disease prevention program, based on the Ridgefield task force BLAST model.

I have personally witnessed the devastating effects that untreated and misdiagnosed Lyme disease has on people. Over 3 years ago, I watched as 2 vibrant women in my community were hit with this destructive disease. Although, their course of treatment was different, one followed the medical route whilst the other pursued homeopathic cures, their symptoms were debilitating. Both searched for definitive answers and diagnosis to no avail. They each spent countless hours and dollars going from one specialist to the next – none of whom recognized Lyme as a “real” disease.

The frustration they both experienced was only exacerbated with the lack of support and information available in our community. Since we live in New England, where tick borne viruses are rampant, one would think that a federally funded task force would be based in our area.

The BLAST group is the only program which provides our local communities with prevention tips and support to those who have contracted Lyme. I fully believe that prevention and early diagnosis is in the best interest of all those living in areas prone to tick borne viruses.

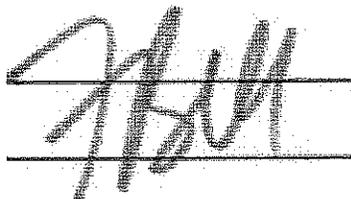
Although my own family does try our best to prevent Lyme disease, I am constantly worried that our children will become infected and have no definitive course of treatment in Connecticut.

If this Bill is approved, the BLAST program will have funding to have five trained Lyme educators under the guidance of the Ridgefield Health Department. This would be monumental in assisting those Lyme sufferers who feel they have nowhere left to turn.

I fully support this bill and I truly hope our legislators will allow BLAST's goal of statewide education and prevention to become a reality in 2015.

Please feel free to email me if needed at: bellf2@comcast.net.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fatima Bell', is written over two horizontal lines. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

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