

Dear Legislators:

I am writing to support this Lyme bill.

Most Connecticut residents are already aware of the importance of avoiding tick exposure in preventing Lyme borreliosis or Lyme disease. However, some still become infected in spite of all the preventive measures taken. Therefore, education should include how to recognize early Lyme disease and seek medical advice at the early stage of the infection for early medical intervention by timely, appropriate treatment with antibiotics. Early intervention needs reliable laboratory diagnosis of early Lyme infections when the spirochetes are still in the circulating blood before antibodies against the spirochetes become detectable by the two-tier serology test. The science of DNA testing for spirochetemia is straightforward [1]. I recommend that community hospital laboratories located in Lyme disease-endemic areas offer such tests to the local residents. I also recommend that the Department of Public Health Microbiology Laboratory conduct periodic proficiency test surveys by sending out blind-coded simulated blood samples spiked with various species of Lyme disease-causing bacteria and irrelevant microbes, and require all hospital laboratories in the State of Connecticut to use their best method to test for Lyme disease infection in these blind-coded blood samples to enhance public confidence in these testing facilities.

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References

[1] Lee SH, Vigliotti JS, Vigliotti VS, Jones W, Moorcroft TA, Lantsman K. DNA Sequencing Diagnosis of Off-Season Spirochetemia with Low Bacterial Density in *Borrelia burgdorferi* and *Borrelia miyamotoi* Infections. *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*. 2014; 15(7):11364-11386.