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I am writing to express my support for Raised Bill #207, an ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR A LYME DISEASE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM. It is vital that the Department of Public Health be awarded \$450,000 a statewide prevention program combining mass media marketing and community education, based on the BLAST model. I am sorry that I was unable to attend today's hearing.

Selecting an existing evidence-based program is both efficient and cost effective. The BLAST Program has built name recognition, valuable private, corporate and public health partnerships, as well as the deep respect of the community, over the past six years. Its recommendations are ones all Connecticut citizens will benefit from.

I've known of the BLAST programs from its inception, and have a great deal of respect for the creators of the program. In my psychotherapy practice, committed to providing individual and family therapy to Lyme disease patients and their families, I have seen some of the results of BLAST, fewer family members becoming ill due to prevention measures taken, more open discussions among neighbors and extended family members of the importance of prevention, and how to implement prevention programs following the BLAST protocol.

As a psychotherapist, my first priority is to see fewer cases of Lyme in this beautiful state in which I live and practice, as well as to help families with ill adults find effective solutions. But as a taxpayer, I am also interested in saving public funds by reducing the strain on social services and education that comes from keeping down the numbers of people that are ill, disabled, unable to afford housing, and/or in need of special education services.

I respectfully appeal to you to consider the above, and pass this legislation, with Ridgefield, the founders and developers of the program, given the authority to implement it.

Sincerely,

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