

Hello, my name is Elaine Walker and I am from Hood River, OR. I am in support of SB916 without amendments.

My only known tick bite was about 40 years ago, when I was seven or eight years old. Starting in college, I presented with vague symptoms, growing in number, then later, my two sons presented with mostly gastrointestinal issues, rashes and anxiety. In 2008, my sons and I were diagnosed with Lyme Disease and coinfections, while my husband tested "in the gray area" for Lyme. I had a positive Lyme Western Blot and coinfection, Babesiosis, test. One of my sons was CDC positive for Lyme and the other was diagnosed clinically with support of symptoms, response to initial treatment and a positive Bartonella test. We were tested by an Oregon naturopath. No Oregon physician ever suggested or tested us for Lyme Disease. One doctor told me to give my son a sugar pill and to tell him "this will help". We all had to travel to CA to receive treatment. My sons treated for 2-3 years and are now doing well.

I responded to continued treatment and felt well enough to discontinue antibiotic treatment in June, 2014. At that time, I also began seeing a new, local doctor for thyroid dysfunction and other issues related to years of infection. My health began declining again in August. In February, 2015, I retested as CDC positive for Lyme and also positive for Epstein Barr. My local Oregon doctor was willing to help treat me for Lyme, by consulting with my CA doctor, but was advised by colleagues to not treat me for fear of putting said (local Oregon) doctor's license in jeopardy. Let me restate and reemphasize that in February 2015, after nearly six years of treatment, I had a CDC POSITIVE test for Lyme Disease but my Oregon doctor was still unable to treat me for fear of disciplinary action. That forced me to return to CA to seek Lyme treatment once again.

This illness has significantly impacted me and my family. Our out of pocket expenses are estimated to be well beyond \$60,000. Our insurance only covers a percentage of treatment because my provider is Out of Network and because the antibiotics are "medically unnecessary". My quality of life has also been impaired. I have been unable to drive for the past three years and it has cut my ability to work in half.

Again, I ask that you please support SB916 without amendments. Doctors must be able to help patients with this illness. The effects of untreated infection can be devastating for individuals and families.

Thank you,  
Elaine Walker