

Hello, my name is Kathy, and I am in support of SB916's passage without amendments.

Here is a brief synopsis of our son Adam's Lyme journey. He has now lived over 1/2 his life trying to recover and "normalize."

In 2007, my 13 year old son started presenting with memory loss, foggy thinking, inability to focus, high anxiety, distorted thinking, and rashes. Our local MD credited this to puberty, saying it was stress. We asked him to test for Lyme disease, suggested to me by the local Lyme community. Our MD refused, saying Lyme disease didn't exist here, and that he would not test Adam for it, either. We took Adam to 4 more doctors, including ones at OHSU, and 2 other local MD's. All said stress, puberty.

My son attempted suicide as his undiagnosed disease progressed. He was hospitalized at Portland Providence Psychiatric Unit. Twice. Admitted to Parry Center as long our insurance would allow. He lost the ability to read, he started to have garbled speech, more rashes. Odd tics in his neck. He went from being an identified Talented and Gifted student to being unable to attend school. More psychiatric drugs, Prednisone for the rashes. We asked every Oregon professional to please consider Lyme disease, all looked at us as if we'd lost our minds. Upon increasing psychiatric manifestations, our son was admitted to Children's Farm Home in Corvallis for a period of time until he could stabilize long enough to be at home (could no longer attend school at this time). We received back into our home a very drugged child.

Our local Naturopathic physician did a Western Blot test on Adam. It came back indeterminate, but she felt he had enough of a clinical presentation that we should pursue this matter with a Lyme Literate Psychiatrist in Seattle, WA. We did so, he was diagnosed with late stage Lyme disease, Bartonella and Babesia. Upon returning to our local MD, he refused to accept the diagnosis and we were told to seek treatment elsewhere.

We have spent our entire savings on traveling to a Lyme Literate physician in CA for the last four years. Once our son was stabilized, his care was shifted to our local Naturopathic physician, for whom we are so grateful.

The price of this journey? Our savings, multiple refinancing of our home, disrupted family dynamics. And our son lost the ability to be a kid, enjoying his teenage years and doing what healthy kids get to do.

Thank you for considering this written testimony. I will not be able to attend the hearing in person.

Kathy