

Submitter: Linda Middlekauff  
On Behalf Of: Self  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3439

As someone who has been a patient of a Naturopath Doctor since 2012 (in addition to MD's), I strongly support HB 3439. This was when my PCP had no idea of what was wrong with me and so referred me to my dermatologist, who asked me if I'd ever thought I could have Lyme Disease (LD). I had not. He told me that my symptoms were those of someone with chronic LD, but I had never had a bullseye rash or been bitten by a tick as far as I knew. He convinced me to have a blood test to test for the DNA of the bacteria which causes LD. It was positive, which set me on a 2 year journey of very challenging treatment but which saved my life. Today I am LD free!

In order to pay for this treatment, my husband and I had to take out money from our retirement savings, but we were blessed to have that resource. Many sufferers of chronic LD and other tickborne illnesses are not so blessed and so have not been able to access the treatment they so much deserve.

The reason they cannot access the needed treatment is that the traditional medical community (with a few exceptions) has refused to acknowledge that Chronic LD exists, and that's because of the stand against this disease by the Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA). Ironically, one of its founding members, Burton Weisbren, MD FIDSA, FCP, treated Chronic LD for over 40 years. Because of the resistance of IDSA, another professional organization was birthed about 15-20 years ago to research CLD and other tickborne illnesses, the International Lyme & Associated Diseases Association, which is actually doing research on Lyme survivors like me and has developed certification for primary care providers including Naturopath Doctors to become "Lyme literate".

Changes in traditional medicine can, in some cases, be very slow.

Please look at those who may have chronic LD with the greatest compassion. It manifests in so many ways as the bacteria can invade any part of the body and the brain. Most are in terrible pain and have resultant disabilities leading to family issues, loss of employment, depression, suicide, etc..

The hundreds of thousands of people in the USA and most likely many more have so many barriers to receiving appropriate treatment let alone acknowledgement that they have chronic LD. PLEASE MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR THEM AND TAKE AND VOTE "YES" ON HB 3439.

Thank you,  
Linda Middlekauff, Roseburg