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My daughter, Nina, was a healthy teenager attending Boswell High School until she was diagnosed with Mono the Fall of her Junior year. Mono compromised her immune system and in her weakened state Lyme Disease (which we believe she contracted as a child) reared its ugly head. For two years we bounced from doctor to doctor to figure out why she had terrible joint pain, brain fog, unexplained cysts, insomnia, no energy, etc. It was an intune Chiropractor that mentioned Lyme Disease and her amazing doctor who listened to me and tested her for Lyme... she tested positive. We were lucky compared to so many others. We were lucky that someone mentioned Lyme could be a possibility, lucky that her test wasn't a false negative and even luckier that a doctor had the kindness and humility to listen to a mom who was desperate for an answer and diagnosis.

It has been four years since Nina's Mono diagnosis. She is still not 100%. There is no one-size-fits-all Lyme cure for everyone. It has to be an individualized treatment plan. We are on our third Lyme Literate practitioner in Texas and we are cautiously optimistic that this will be our last. She had to drop out of college and she is anxious to get well and continue her life.

Along this journey we have met and heard countless of horrible stories from fellow Texans that have gone 10, 20, 30 years and seen 20-50 doctors without a diagnosis. Now they have to reverse all of that damage that Lyme and "friends" (co-infections) like Babesia, Bartonella, etc. have done to their body.

I will be a voice for those that are bed-ridden, too sick or too tired to send in testimony or come to testify before you today.

The Sunset Commission is tasked with reviewing the Texas Medical Board (TMB) this year. I hope and pray that you take the

time to read every email and comment that has been submitted regarding the TMB.

If the TMB would do just a few things quickly, it would be a great start to help alleviate the frustration of the thousands of Texans that either have Lyme and know it or those that are suffering and do not know why.

Part of the TMB's mission is to educate doctors. They need to educate Texas doctors that Lyme IS IN Texas and provide Continued Medical Education (as indicated in SB 1360 passed May 25, 2011)

Please honor former Senator Chris Harris who was misdiagnosed for years, suffered unnecessarily and most likely died from Lyme complications on my birthday, December 19, 2015, by helping the thousands of Texans that are not getting the diagnosis they need to end their "diagnosis quest" and be able to begin Lyme treatment.

Here is a heart breaking, small sampling of comments when I asked our group of Lyme sufferers what their experience was with an Infectious Disease (ID) doctor:

*ID Said "there's no Lyme in Texas, and even if you had it, it's too late to treat. Nothing I can do for you..." Wouldn't even run tests. **4 years** later I found a Lyme Literate Medical Doctor (LLMD) and this group.*

Took my son to one that was recommended by his doctor, mainly to deal with his chronic CMV that is not going away. The doctor laughed at his Igenex test, wouldn't treat the CMV that he has tested positive for twice, but did suggest testing my son for HIV! My son got sick right after his 15th birthday and was not on the

dating scene yet. Didn't even screen him to see if he had any behaviors that would even warrant it. Afterwards, my son was freaking out that maybe he did have HIV from a dirty syringe during all his gazillion blood draws!

The ID I saw was very condescending. As soon as I said the word Lyme, this entire demeanor changed. He gave me a Medrol pack and told me to stay off of the internet...

I went to an Infectious Disease doctor in Houston for 3 years of the 14 I have been ill. That's where I was diagnosed and treated first for 3 Years. A year of doxycycline. Then 6 weeks of 2 grams of rocephin a day via a picc line. Then riphampin for 3 months. Then doxy again. Didn't get better in 3 years so moved on to a 2nd infectious disease in the Houston medical center. Didn't get better there either. Moved on through several doctors before finding a LLMD. I finally made some progress.

We saw 2 ID docs and both were a train wreck. First one blatantly told us my daughter did NOT have Lyme since no bullseye, etc. She back pedaled when the test was CDC POSITIVE via lab Corp. However, despite our producing a 10 page document describing her 4 year progression into illness with a documented tick bite she REFUSED to diagnose chronic/late stage Lyme and insisted she was ACUTE. We knew this was impossible since she had been home in bed for months and never outdoors. The second ID had the gall to suggest the CDC positive was a FALSE positive yet offered no explanation for her illness other than possible "post Lyme syndrome".

I saw an ID after I had taken 2 weeks of antibiotics prescribed by another doctor. I told her I was still having symptoms and thought I might need more antibiotics. The ID doc said she didn't think I had Lyme (even w/ positive test) and said if I did, I had already been treated, so she recommended a psychiatrist.

The CDC estimates that there **are 329,000 Americans** contracting acute Lyme disease each year.

- This number **DOES NOT** include late stage Lyme patients. Nor does this number include the thousands and thousands of people who are going undiagnosed and/or misdiagnosed each year.
- Some experts believe the actual number of new cases could be as high as one to two **million** new cases per year in the U.S. alone.
- To put things into perspective for you, Lyme disease is twice as common as Breast Cancer and six times as common as AIDS. Just let that sink in for a moment.
- Lyme disease is the fastest growing infectious disease but also in America. There are 100 different strains of borrelia in the USA and 300 worldwide.
- Congenital LYME IS REAL!
- The National Institutes of Health spends more money on HEADACHES than it does on Lyme research!

- There are over 300 symptoms of Lyme disease which is why we call it **the great imitator** because it literally can present itself as hundreds of illnesses. It can literally affect every single organ in your body which is why it is so hard to detect.

ZIKA gets so much press (and funding!) and for those with Lyme Disease it is an insult and very defeating to see all of the attention given to this disease.

According to the CDC as of November 30, 2016:

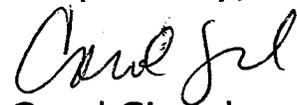
US States

- **Locally acquired mosquito-borne cases reported: 185**
- Travel-associated cases reported: 4,310
- Laboratory acquired cases reported: 1
- Total: 4,496

There are so many Texans that are suffering. The Texas Medical Board needs to fulfill its mission and educate Texas doctors about Lyme Disease ASAP.

Please, please help those that are suffering currently with Lyme and those that have it and are not aware.

Respectfully,



Carol Siegel