

**A little snow won't stop us.
Hearing rescheduled for February 5.**



Thanks to Mother Nature, we have an extra week to submit letters and make plans to testify.

The CT Department of Public Health is seeking funding to roll the BLAST Lyme Disease Prevention Program out statewide. This means that community members interested in Lyme disease prevention will have a

BLAST contact at a local health department to assist with health events and presentations.

While volunteers will always be important to the program, the bill is seeking to fund five trained BLAST educators with the **Ridgefield Health Department** serving as the coordination point. Funding will also cover a statewide PR/advertising campaign featuring key prevention points. This bill is being raised by the Committee on Children and is the first bill of its kind in CT.

The ability to offer prevention education statewide as a sustainable effort through the Department of Health has been our goal since BLAST was created in 2008. With your support—it will become a reality in 2015.

There are two ways to help:

1) Email your letter of support by 5 p.m., Wednesday the 4th in word or pdf format: KIDtestimony@cga.ct.gov

(Letters already submitted are on file for the hearing)

2) Testify in person on Thursday, February 5



Raised Bill No. 207

AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR A LYME DISEASE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. *(Effective July 1, 2015)* The sum of four hundred fifty thousand dollars is appropriated to the Department of Public Health, from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, for the purpose of: (1) A grant in the amount of one hundred seventy thousand dollars to enable the department to develop and execute a social marketing campaign to educate entities in the state regarding Lyme disease prevention, and (2) a grant in the amount of two hundred eighty thousand dollars to the Ridgefield Health Department to develop and implement a regional community prevention program for Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses utilizing the BLAST Lyme disease prevention program model.

Keep track of the Bill's progress here: [Bill 207](#)



Tips for Testifying in Person

The Committee on Children Public Hearing will be held on Thursday, February 5, 2015, at 11:30 a.m. in the Legislative Office Building, Room 2B.

Anyone wishing to testify must sign up the morning of the hearing. Sign up begins at 10:30 a.m. (The line begins forming early in the morning. The building is open 24 hours a day.) Speakers generally follow the order you sign in. Multiple

bills are raised each day. The first hour is reserved for legislators and agency heads or invited guests.

Bring 30 copies of your testimony for the committee staff. They would appreciate also receiving testimony by email in advance so that it can be posted on the hearing site. Email written testimony in Word or PDF format to KIDtestimony@cqa.ct.gov and indicate whether or not you will be attending.

Testimony should clearly state testifier name and bill. Speakers will be limited to three minutes. The Committee encourages witnesses to submit a written statement and to condense oral testimony to a summary of that statement. All testimony is public information.

When you are called, sit at the speaker's desk. You may begin with "Madam Chair, Mr. Chairman" (as appropriate) "and members of the committee." Introduce yourself very distinctly so the transcriber can understand, and mention your town and the number and title of the bill you'll be speaking on. In addition, most hearings and meetings are covered by Connecticut Network (CT-N) for broadcast over local cable access stations.

Indicate right away whether you support the bill, oppose it, or are offering suggestions to improve it. Then explain your reasoning. Keep your remarks short; 3-5 minutes is usually enough, but be sure not to exceed any announced time limits. If other speakers have already made your point, you can say that you agree with, or want to associate yourself with the remarks of previous speakers. Your views and your name will then be clearly on record.

Questions: Call Committee on Children Clerk, Alessandra Burgett at 860-240-8396.

Public Hearing Testimony Submissions

Please be aware that all submitted testimony is public record. Depending upon the information you supply, this may reveal some or all of the following: Email address, physical address, phone number, name, age, and other personal information. Mail and FAX submissions are scanned and linked on the Connecticut General Assembly website. This information would also be available to be found using internet search engines.

Sample Letter: Personalize as appropriate

To: Chairs and Members of the Committee on Children

I am writing in support of Raised Bill No. 207, AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR A LYME DISEASE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM. I believe the Connecticut Department of Health (DPH) should be awarded \$450,000 to implement and sustain a statewide Lyme disease prevention effort combining mass media marketing and community-based education based on the BLAST Lyme prevention model.

Selecting an existing evidence-based program is both efficient and cost effective. The BLAST Program has built name recognition as well as valuable private, corporate and public health partnerships over the past six years. Its recommendations are ones all Connecticut citizens will benefit from. Supporting regional BLAST educators with advertising, public relations and social media marketing is an excellent strategy to reinforce the key prevention points especially during peak infection months.

BLAST stands for the five most important measures that people can take to prevent tick-borne diseases by reducing tick bites.

- B stands for bathing soon after spending time outdoors,
- L reminds people to look their bodies over for ticks and to remove them properly,
- A encourages people to apply repellents appropriately when outdoors,
- S stands for spraying the perimeter of yards at the most effective time of the year,
- T reminds people to treat pets.

This request for funding comes at a time when citizens are increasingly concerned that forty years after the illness was discovered in our state, Connecticut continues to have one of the highest rates of Lyme disease in the country. The problem is even more serious now that we know the same tick species that transmits the agent that causes Lyme also transmits anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis and babesiosis to people. Research has shown, if employed

sufficiently, personal protection measures, and environmental tick-control measures around the home can reduce the number of cases.

While Lyme disease is generally a mild illness when diagnosed and treated quickly, the disease may cause serious or chronic illness involving multiple body systems, and this underscores the importance of using prevention measures. People at the highest risk for tick-transmitted diseases, including Lyme disease, are children under 10 and adults over 55 years of age.

A commitment of state funds is needed to implement and sustain a statewide prevention program focused on raising awareness of tick-borne disease prevention in 2015.

Sincerely,

Name/town/state



Helpful Information

Connecticut General Assembly Schedules and directions: [click here](#)

Complete guide to testifying: [click here](#)

Committee on Children: [click here](#)

BLAST Lyme Disease Prevention Program: [click here](#)

Information is included on our website: www.LymeConnection.org



Our Contact Information

Lyme Connection
66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
203-241-2400

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