

Lynn Young
North Yarmouth
LD 716

LD 716 An Act to Restrict the Hunting of Coyotes.

I want to tell you a story of Lyme disease. We all know that Maine has a growing problem with Lyme disease but I want to tell you my story. And, I hope with all my heart that you will support LD 716.

We live in North Yarmouth. Everyone in my family has had Lyme disease. 99% of the people who live on my road have had Lyme disease. Much too late we discovered our youngest daughter had Lyme disease. Because she was one of the 30+ percent of people who don't get a bullseye rash with Lyme we didn't know she had it until it had done irreparable damage. My daughter played soccer from the time she was five years old, played on several teams at a time, and was a standout four year varsity player in highschool. Her senior year of high school she got sicker and sicker. We discovered she had Celiac disease, turned on by Lyme, no family genetic predisposition there. She spent what was to be her freshman year of college in bed. She gave up her plan to travel internationally for university. She did manage to go to a school in between home and her doctor the next year and barely made it through the next four years.

After graduating she physically collapsed and has gotten worse every year since. It seems the Lyme has turned on a syndrome called Mal de Debarquement. Imagine if you felt like you lived on a trampoline that someone else was jumping on. 24/7. Year after year. Her life is destroyed. She can't look at screens, ride in a car or read a book. And yet, she hasn't given up and holds out hope. She is the strongest person I know.

What does this have to do with coyotes you ask? We need them to help keep a rodent population under control. White-footed mice are the main hosts of the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. And adult ticks breed thousands of their offspring on the large bodies of deer. And, we have too many deer in southern Maine.

I have lost track of the thousands of dollars we have spent on my daughter's medical bills. This has become a financial burden and a heartbreaking life for someone who was so vibrant and destined to make a difference in the world.

Please do all you can to support LD 716. Lyme isn't going away and nothing we have done so far has made a difference in trying to mitigate the misery Lyme brings to our children and elders, the two most vulnerable sections of our population.

I am grateful every time I hear Coyotes howling! You should, as well.

Lynn Young, 67 Sweetser Road, North Yarmouth