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Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2026 8:26 PM
To: Catherine Wallen <Cwallen@pahousegop.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Lyme

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For more than 15 years, I was told my symptoms were caused by something else. I saw doctor after doctor, searching for answers while my health continued to decline. I began to question myself because no one could explain why I was suffering. Often I heard, "It's all in your head".

It wasn't until I was admitted to the hospital that everything changed. The hospital was baffled and had no explanation. A veteran who had also battled Lyme disease urged me to request a Western blot test through IGeneX. That one conversation led to the diagnosis I had spent more than a decade desperately searching for.

The results were undeniable. I tested positive on 12 of the 14 Lyme-specific bands, with Lyme disease testing +++, and I was also diagnosed with Bartonella and Babesia—two serious tick-borne coinfections.

By the time I was finally diagnosed, the damage had already been done. I now live with chronic Lyme disease. Every day is a battle against debilitating migraines, chronic joint pain, memory loss, brain fog, overwhelming fatigue, depression, and anxiety. This disease has stolen years of my life—years that I can never get back.

No one should have to wait 15 plus years for a diagnosis. No one should have to rely on a chance encounter with another patient to receive the testing they need. And no one should have to face the overwhelming financial burden of paying out of pocket for treatment because insurance refuses to recognize the reality of this disease.

I am here today because I don't want anyone else to endure what I have endured. I ask you to support increased Lyme disease education for healthcare providers and the public, invest in research that leads to better prevention and an effective vaccine, and require insurance companies to cover the testing and treatment that patients desperately need.

Please don't let another family lose years of their lives waiting to be believed. Let my story be the reason someone else gets diagnosed sooner, receives treatment earlier, and has the chance to fully recover.

Tiffany Riser
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