

**Written Testimony from Janice McCament**  
**House Finance, Subcommittee of Health and Human Services**  
**House Bill 49—State Biennium Budget**  
**March 22, 2017**

Hello Chairman Romanchuk, Ranking Member Sykes and Members of the Health and Human Services Subcommittee. My name is Janice McCament, I'm from Knox County and my son Keven has cerebral palsy and relies on a wheelchair for mobility. I'm writing to testify on concerns related to community integration and the struggles our son has getting around in a wheelchair.

Thank you for reading my testimony concerning an area of interest close to my heart, people living with disabilities. Actually my son Keven, who sits in his wheelchair and does not walk, prefers the word "disABILITIES."

My husband Wes and I live in Mount Vernon. Our eldest son James lives in Virginia and works in Washington D.C, and our youngest son Keven lives with us. Before Keven was born, Wes, James and I were traveling through life without major incidences. But our lives took a turn onto a new path when Keven was born forty years ago. He was born premature and is a quadriplegic due to cerebral palsy.

As he grew it became evident Keven would require a high level of care. We have been blessed to live during a time when people with disabilities and their needs are given consideration, which has not always been the case in this country. For example, ramps into buildings and handicap accessible parking are normal now and make a world of difference to Keven. We're also blessed that we can access the funding needed for Keven's equipment, including wheelchairs that have met his needs as he has grown. He now has an electric wheelchair which gives him more independence.

Though there are blessings there are also concerns. First, we give a sigh of relief whenever there is a handicap accessible parking spot for us, but sometimes the area marked in white is not wide enough. Though a sign indicates van parking only, sometimes the area given for the lift to come down does not give enough room to maneuver the chair without hitting the car parked next to the marked area. My husband is more of a risk taker than I am, so when it comes to maneuvering Keven's wheelchair in a tight spot I ask him to take over getting Keven onto the lift and out of the vehicle.

Another area I would like to mention is double-doors into buildings. It would be helpful if there were either a button to push or one set of doors. It takes a bit of maneuvering to get Keven and his service dog, Star, into the building. We have to hold one door open, then quickly changing positions to open the other door. Thankfully if there are people around they kindly help us by holding doors open. But sometimes there is no one to help us. In many ways life is like a set of double doors, and it's not easily.

I would like to close by thanking you all for helping to make life easier for those of us caring for a loved one with disABILITIES. We didn't ask to be on this journey, but we would not ask for the journey to be any different. Our lives are richer and fuller because of our sons. Keven has been a blessing beyond our dreams.

Thank you for allowing us to share our blessings with you. As you make decisions for our state I'd ask that you consider the challenges of community integration. Next time you enter a building think about the challenges people face entering the building. I hope this consideration will motivate you to support updating the ADA to help people like Keven. Thank you!