

**Diane Page**

**Mother of Chris Page who was wrongfully arrested because he has a communication disability, Autism.**

**Job Coach, Dublin City Schools Post-Secondary Program for adults with disabilities.**

**I am for HB No. 115. 132<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly Representative Gavarone, Wiggam  
Cosponsors: Representatives Ryan, Greenspan, Kick, Goodman, Hambley,  
Thompson, Arndt, Lipps, Patton, Stein, Riedel.**

**To enact section 3304.23 and 5502.08**

**On March 26, 2016 my son, Chris Page was stopped for a minor traffic violation in a construction site off 270 by Dublin Police. When the officer approached Chris's car after he stopped at the side of the road, the officer asked for Chris's driver's license and registration and Chris handed them to him. Now at this moment, things could have been very different if this Bill was in effect. Chris Page's check on his license plate and license would have revealed Chris has a communication disability (autism) and the officer would have been trained on autism, a communication disability and Chris's treatment would have been different.**

**But because the State of Ohio does not offer an individual with a communication disability to take their medical proof and have their disability put into the LEADS program, law enforcement automatic data system, for law enforcement to have as proof of their disability, Chris told the officer he had autism. But the officer said, "You may have this medical condition, but were not doctors". Exactly, so the state of Ohio needs to protect individuals by allowing individuals to show this proof and the officer would have their proof that Chris has a communication disability.**

**So since there is not this protection for individuals with a communication disability in the state of Ohio, Chris was traumatized. Because Chris did not make eye contact and acted different with the officer because individuals with autism do not make eye contact, the officer asked Chris to get out of his car and he was asked to do a sobriety test. Chris failed because of his communication disability. Autism is a social/communication disability, and it is hard for individuals on the spectrum to understand directions. But it is also difficult for them to make eye contact, to**

**understand or comprehend your questions and trouble expressing themselves. Individuals on the ASD, (autism spectrum disability), have issues with balance and motor planning, so a sobriety test is impossible for them to pass. This has nothing to do with driving issues.**

**I had Chris tested at OSU Driving School when he was 16 after he had his driving temps, for any issues that might constitute problems with him driving. OSU driving evaluation for individuals with disabilities like communication disabilities put Chris through two-and-a-half-hour appointment that consists of a clinical evaluation and on-road assessment in a vehicle. The clinic portion assessment did not include anything pertaining to a Sobriety Test. The on-road assessment completes a driving course with a driving rehabilitation specialist. Upon completion of the evaluation, all results and recommendations are shared with the client. Chris's evaluation came back he was very capable to drive. Chris Page has been driving for 14 years.**

**Chris Page has not had an incident until he was stopped March 26, 2016. Besides the stress of being stopped and not understood by law enforcement, because Chris has a communication disability, even though he told them he had autism. Law enforcement are not doctors and need the proof to be provided by those individuals who voluntarily want this information available to law enforcement. Chris Page and thousands of individuals want to be able to provide their medical proof for communication disability that would be proof to law enforcement if they are stopped.**

**But because the state of Ohio does not protect individuals with communication disability with law enforcement, Chris had the stress of being stopped by 2 police officers, and put through a sobriety test he did not pass, hand cuffed, hauled to police department, Chris's car searched, given a breathalyzer test he passed, finger printed, had to give a urine sample to be sent out for evaluation, Chris's car was impounded for the week-end.**

**It took Chris Page \$120.00 for bail, \$240.00 to get his car out of impoundment, 4 months to get the urine sample back to clear his OVI charge, (Chris had to go each month to court to see if urine sample**

**was back, missing work) and the charges cannot be expunged, all because Chris Page has a communication disability, autism, that the state of Ohio does not allow individuals to have the opportunity to provide proof. The state of Alabama has allowed individuals to be put in their law enforcement data base and law enforcement has had trained on communication disabilities since 2012. And there are many other states with this Bill.**

**So for a year I have been contacting state representatives, Governor Kasich, House and Senate members for Ohio, Autism Speaks, Ohio of Development Disabilities, OSU Nisonger Center, my parent groups who have children with communication disabilities such as autism. I have all of these groups who support this bill. Along with law enforcement officers in Dublin, Delaware, Westerville, and many others who want this bill to pass.**

**I fear if this Bill does not pass, that in the future, individuals with a communication disability will be subject to the same traumatic incident with law enforcement as Chris Page experienced. But I also, fear much greater consequences for the outcome of some individuals with communication disabilities and law enforcement if this Bill does not pass that will lead to an individual injured or even possibly killed because of being misunderstood by law enforcement as under the influence. We must protect individuals with communication disabilities and protect our law enforcement by passing this Bill. This Bill will provide knowledge to law enforcement that is crucial to protect both people with communication disabilities and law enforcement. Please do not let Ohio be behind so many other states in protecting individuals with communication disabilities. There is not anyone I have talked to that doesn't understand why Ohio has not passed a Bill like this years ago.**

**I am for House Bill No. 115; this Bill is long overdue!**

**Diane Page**

**Job Coach Dublin City Schools**

**Post-Secondary Program for Adults with Disabilities**

**Mother of Chris Page, son with Autism**

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