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Members of the State of Ohio Legislature, Health Committee

Thank you for what you do. You have a very important role, and we understand that you inherited a system that is a culmination of all of the decisions made before you. Lots of weight - lots of opportunity.

I'm submitting testimony today, knowing that we can create a significant shift if you all decide to support HCR25. We can all agree that this is a difficult time for all of us, and looking back at history, we all have suffered trauma as part of the human condition. We adapt, and as we adapt, sometimes the result of something bad happening to us causes us to be one who is deemed a criminal, untrustworthy or dangerous. And as a society, as we pass judgement or turn a blind eye, we are unknowingly creating more trauma. Generation upon generation it compounds.

We have learned a ton, and can be grateful for all that we have done. Along the way though, we zoned in on ways to treat conditions in the medical community, our social structures and within the family unit that also cause harm. It feels like we are only treating symptoms. Do we really understand?

I was very lucky to have the opportunity to take time off work to focus on me. During this time, I consumed information about the physical body, the brain, Psychology, drugs, addiction, spirituality, cultures, history, mental disorders...diving deep to figure out what the heck was wrong with me and how to fix it. I saw a therapist during this time and she kept saying it sounded like trauma. My depression and anxiety are my way of basically having a panic attack. My body is protecting me. Can't move forward, can't change the past, stuck in cement. I kept telling her I had a good life. How could it be trauma...well, it was.

There is so much I could share here about my life, the individual traumas, and more importantly the traumas of others I'm close with from all backgrounds - this really is a much bigger problem than we see. All of us have been touched in one way or another. It is so clear once we see it and understand it. It would be so neat to have a toolset available to us to navigate it.

I heard Ronald Hummons speak at a State House Rally this past summer about the "State of Emergency on Childhood Trauma.". As he spoke of his life, I teared up and felt shivers.

Although what he experienced was far worse, I could relate. What he was proposing to solve it...ABSOLUTELY, I'm In. If educators, the medical community and others were informed and really understood, I may have been saved from close to 40 years of apathy, tension, depression, shame and co-dependent relationships. Our current system let me down. We have an opportunity to help people now in a better different way. Once we understand WHY, we can make changes to HOW.

It is so clear to me the domino impact....if we feel safe we have the opportunity to shine. If we are in fear, we are looking for something bad to happen. We expect people to harm us. We feel invisible. We can become like a horse with a broken spirit or a dog that lashes out. This creates many of the societal problems that we are all living with, and it compounds itself. Children are being raised by folks who experienced trauma, we are passing it down. We can reverse the trajectory. Reduce crime. Reduce Drug Addiction. Reduce Apathy. Tap into unleashed creativity. Increase productivity. Increase kindness. Reduce Health Care costs overall because "Dis"Ease is exactly that.

Let's make this a priority. Change here can create positive change in other places. And...prevent future trauma.