



## Ohio Bleeding Disorders Council

### **Jennifer Loving**

Batavia, OH

Proponent – House Bill 185

*Board member for the Tri-State Bleeding Disorders Foundation & Ohio Bleeding Disorders Council and Mom to Jackson Loving (Severe Hemophilia A, Factor 8 deficient)*

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill 185, legislation that would designate March as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month.

Jackson was born with a genetic bleeding disorder called Hemophilia. Growing up I knew little to nothing about bleeding disorders. I knew enough to mention it to my OB/GYN at each pregnancy, but bleeding disorders are so rare the medical team did not really worry. It wasn't until my pregnancy with Jackson that the medical team worried. The medical team had plans in place to make sure that both he and I would be safe upon delivery.

Jackson was born on March 7<sup>th</sup> with no complications! It wasn't until the infant heel stick that refused to stop bleeding turned our worry into fear. Instead of heading home with our newborn baby we were directed to head to the Hematology Department at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. It was there we received Jackson's diagnosis: Severe Hemophilia A, Factor 8 deficiency. It was also discovered at this time he had his first bleed requiring a two day stay at the NICU and his first blood clotting medicine infusion.

We spent the first few months of Jackson's life navigating insurance, blood clotting medicine, doctor's appointments and milestone developments. As a parent you get excited when your baby starts to crawl, then walk. To a parent of a child with a bleeding disorder it's an emotional roller coaster. Once you think you've weathered the storm of one milestone you get ready for the next one and the challenges it presents to a child with a bleeding disorder.

I am happy to report that Jackson is now a healthy, active 13-year-old in junior high! He has participated in team sports such as flag football and basketball. Jackson has attended several years of Ohio Statehouse Days and Washington Days in order to share his bleeding disorder story and help advocate for legislation to support the bleeding disorder community in Ohio.

Having March designated as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month is important to our family because our population is rare. Having a month allows us to have a voice and recognition about the importance for both males and females to seek medical treatment if they suspect unusual bleeding. It encourages medical doctors and scientists to look for advancements in care for those living with a bleeding disorder. At this time, I will introduce Jackson and he will share his thoughts with you.

Good Morning! Every March our family takes a picture as we are dressed in red, and I hold a Bleeding Disorder Awareness sign that we share on social media. This is important to me because this shows that my family loves and supports me. It's also important to show others that yes, I have a bleeding disorder, but I am just like everyone else, except I bleed a little longer.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to Representative Sweeney for carrying this important bill and also extend my appreciation to the cosponsors of HB 185 and to the members of this committee for your thoughtful consideration. We ask that you support HB 185 to designate March as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month for not only our family but the many others across Ohio. Thank you.