

10/4/2023

Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Health Provider Services Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide support testimony for HB 236; "The Never Alone Act."

My brother Chris Breinich was a father of 4 children. He worked tirelessly as a nurse to help others. He started his career after serving in the United States Army at his alma mater, The Ohio State University Hospital. He then worked at the Marion Correctional Facility for many years. He also worked at a prison in Charlotte NC for a while. Nursing in a prison is thankless and incredibly hard work. He also spent some time as a middle school nurse. His last job was working for Central Star Home Health Services, where he was able to really get to know his patients, and they loved him. He was 52 years young when his life was taken.

In March of 2021 he went to the Galion Community Hospital after getting COVID. He was given an antibiotic after being diagnosed with multi-focal pneumonia and sent home. A week later he was back at the Galion hospital in distress. They gave him Remdesivir and a week later he was talked into being put on a ventilator for "ease of transport and comfort, while going to another hospital". This is what they told him.

I had called someone at the hospital days prior demanding that we be allowed in to see him and advocate for him. She told me that unless he was critical, we could NOT see him.

On the day he was put on a ventilator, he was texting his wife to get him out or he was gonna die, saying to get home meds, bipap, oxygen concentration. He said their killing me, I gotta get this fluid off (screenshot attached).

Can you even fathom getting that text from your husband, brother, or son? Then imagine trying to go to them and being stopped at the door by a police officer.

The scene was myself, our mother, Chris's wife and 4 children standing just outside the hospital doors crying. Begging to be able to go in and see him. By this time, he had been sedated and put on ventilator. At this point I called the woman back and asked if this was critical enough. She sent word down to the guard that we could come in 2 at a time for a few minutes.

How can anyone heal when they are all alone for days or weeks at a time, in a state of fear and panic. Everyone needs an advocate to help them with decisions when they are too sick to make them for themselves

Once he was at Riverside Hospital, Chris was allowed limited visitation, 2 hours per day, by his wife because the COVID quarantine period was over. COVID was no longer the issue and yet the visitation was severely limited.

Less than a week later he was transferred to Cincinnati Medical Center and put on dialysis and ECMO machines. We could only visit for 2 hours every OTHER day. This type of visitation was about control and convenience for the hospital employees.

He ended up getting a pulmonary bleed due to the ECMO and blood thinners. They told us his lungs were irreparably damaged. April 26th 2021, we had to let him go. He was surrounded by his immediate family, when we shut the machines off. It was the worst thing I have ever experienced in my life but I am grateful that I was able to be there. I realize that many were denied that option. Can you even imagine not being able to be there and hold the hand of your loved one as they passed on. For what reason I ask! To me, there is no reason good enough.

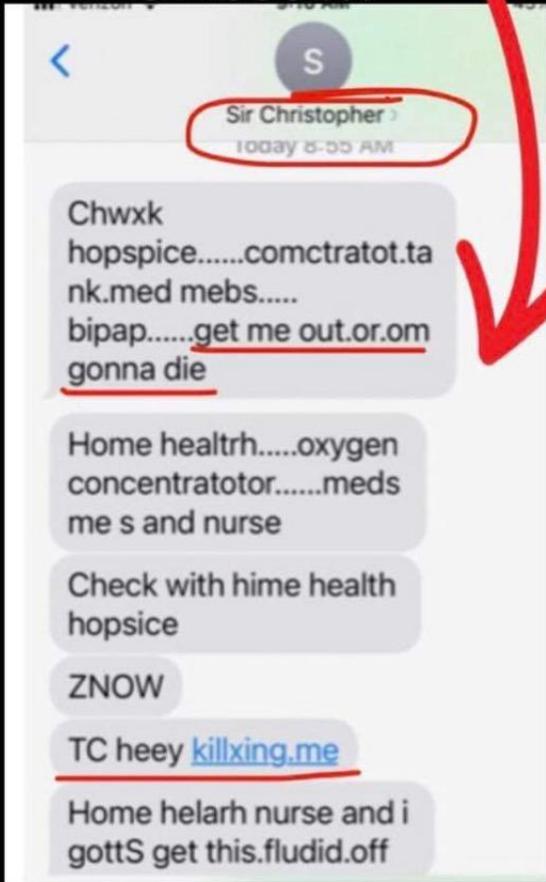
A Yes vote from the committee will not bring my brother back, but it will ensure that someone else's loved one will not be denied an advocate, or comfort from visitors while in the hospital.

Please vote Yes on HB 236. Please make sure stories like this never happen to anyone ever again.

Thank you.

Heather Falzone

Chris' last text message to his wife, Mellissa...



Chris Breinich

1968 - 2021

**Registered Nurse
& Army Veteran**

