

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 wife was hospitalized at Aultman hospital in Canton, Ohio with COVID symptoms on September 9, 2021. From that time until mid October I was prevented from visiting my wife in the hospital per hospital policy. It was excruciating to only be able to get an occasional update from staff via phone conversation as her condition continued to worsen. She was vented on her birthday September 17th. I received a panicked call from her doctor at 2 a.m. on that day and could hear staff screaming in the background as they tried to vent her as her body was rejecting the vent. All I could do was beg them to help her.

Still for the next several weeks I could not go see her as she moved closer to what looked like certain decease. She was vented for six weeks and in my phone calls to her doctors they were preparing me for her end. Still I could not be there with her.

When I was finally allowed to visit her around October 12 she was fully sedated and vented, but miraculously recovered and was conscious on or about October 30th. No one knows everything about medical science, but I believe my being able to be with her even while she was sedated helped in her recovery. While it was my wife who suffered the most, I also suffered from not being able be with her and waiting alone at home worrying about another 2 a.m. call that might inform me that my dear wife had passed.

I have asked for your ears to give my account of this difficult time in our lives. Now I am asking you for your heart. Please give myself and all citizens in Ohio access to their loved ones in dire medical need. Whether a loved one recovers or sadly passes, it is an essential part of a patients medical treatment to be consulted and comforted by family and loved ones during this time.

I ask the committee members to please vote yes on HB 236.

Sincerely,

Jim Kullman, loving husband of Cynthia Joy Kullman



Cynthia Kullman