

**HB 86 Sub Bill**

**Testimohttps://ohiosenate.gov/committees/general-government**

**Michael A. Rukki, Chair**

**Kirk Schuring, Vice Chair**

**William P. DeMora, ranking member**

**Theresa Gavarone, Dis 2**

**Rob McColley, Dis 1ny for HB 86 Sub Bill**

Have you ever heard that “no one ever died from marijuana?”

False. I am the mother of a daughter that was killed by an impaired driver high on medical marijuana. My name is Corinne LaMarca and my beloved daughter’s name was Jennifer. There is not a day that goes by that I do not miss her and think about how different my life would be right now if she were here.

Cannabis takes lives in many ways but driving is one thing that most of us do. Marijuana impairment poses a severe threat to society as a whole. We have so many impaired drivers currently; now more will be added with the legalization of recreational cannabis. This is a very serious situation endangering our families’, relatives and friends. Losing someone you love is very devastating. It destroys not only the lives taken by this tragedy, but also the families that survive. I have been on this journey for 12 years now.

The internet is loaded with misnomers and lies about how marijuana effects a person driving and frankly, you can find commentary that supports just about any position one might have weather is true or not, even the most ridiculous lies. Since most people believe what they want to believe, these marijuana sites are rampant and perpetuate the untruths about the safety of using a hallucinogenic drug that can cause severe impairment, psychosis, suicide ideation and violence. Marijuana is extremely dangerous and causes horrible outcomes for especially our youth with developing brains and bodies.

I have heard from parents of addicted kids telling me that their teens are driving impaired, getting high and hotboxing in their cars. Hotboxing is when an individual or group of people smoke in an unventilated enclosed area are such as a car. The goal is to fill these small confined spaces to intensify the drug’s effects. The occupants inhale the second-hand smoke for an additional time to increase the effects. These events are not taken seriously enough until someone, usually an innocent person, gets killed or maimed by these impaired drivers. Afterwards, parents that are already heartbroken as they watch their sons and daughters go down the path of destroying their lives in addiction, see them destroy other people’s lives as well.

There is a genuine need to educate our youth as early as the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade about the dangers of today's marijuana and how it can impact their brains and bodies. They need to be educated on impaired driving just as much as they have been taught about the potential evils of alcohol and driving. There is plenty of evidence out there already about the impact it is having and way too many victims. Many do not speak out, but I am here speaking out for them.

Before going any further with this legislation, we need to provide education all across Ohio at all levels on the dangers of using marijuana and about the dangers of driving impaired. A program must be created to arm our youth with knowledge. I am asking you to delay the implementation of this until the proper foundation can be laid. I make this appeal so that another mother doesn't have to stand before you and tell you about her loss due to marijuana.

This proposal is a matter of life and death. Don't we owe it to our lifeblood and our state to protect our own. How could we, in good conscience, do otherwise.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Corinne LaMarca  
Jennifer's Mom and Director of Jennifer's Messengers