

11/19/2024

Chairman Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee,

On behalf of my family and the citizens of Ashland, Ohio, I sincerely thank you for allowing me this opportunity to provide testimony with regard to HB 236, Never Alone Act.

On the afternoon of Friday, February 12, 2021, our daughter, Brittani, was diagnosed with stage 3 Colorectal Cancer. She was transported immediately, alone, from the colonoscopy facility to the local hospital for an emergency procedure to stabilize her condition and a treatment plan could be determined.

Due to Covid19 guidelines, visitors were not allowed. I respectfully ask you to imagine yourselves with a child in the hospital, having been diagnosed with a life threatening illness and you, as parents, being refused entry to be by her side. Now I ask you to imagine yourselves as Brittani, alone.

Truly, a nightmare scenario.

Realizing that we had no control over the matter, we did what any of you would have done, I'm certain. We called Mayor, Matt Miller and tearfully requested his influence allowing us access. Within 15 minutes we were told that we would be allowed entry for a short visitation. The president of the hospital would meet us at the door as escort and masks would be required. We will be forever grateful.

Subsequently, it occurred to me that not everyone affected by these limited access rules would have the same channels of influence available to them. Not everyone is a city councilman, not everyone has their mayor's cell number, and not everyone would be afforded this exceptional act of compassion.

However, everyone should.

I urge the committee to vote yes on HB 236.

With Appreciation,

Steve Workman

Ward 1 Ashland City Council, President