

Emily Hosler

Proponent Testimony
Senate Bill 27
House Health Committee
April 9th, 2025

Chairwoman Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for SB 27 Ameloblastoma Awareness Day.

My name is Emily Hosler and I live in Cincinnati, Ohio. I'm not only 1 out of 1,000,000 people nationwide who are diagnosed with Ameloblastoma but 1 of 12 people who are diagnosed in the state of Ohio annually.

This is a rare, locally aggressive tumor that grows inside your jawbone mainly by the molars and counts for 1% of jaw-based tumors. In most cases they're benign and come without any symptoms. If these lesions are left untreated, they will continue to grow and potentially be fatal. Yes, these tumors are benign in most cases, however, they are treated aggressively due to the fact they will grow back if anything is left behind.

I, like most people, are unaware of this diagnosis. With little education out there, it's extremely hard to know the direction of where to start, and the education that is out there is very little.

For me, my tumor was found during my annual x-ray visit with my Dentist and ended up being 3.5 cm long and was eating through my lower right jawbone. After being told that "they've never seen this before", I was referred to get it biopsied.

There are a couple of procedures to remove this tumor. One of them is to take your fibula and mold it into your jaw where the tumor was with a titanium plate as a structure. This consists of a large cut on your lower leg, a cut on your neck with the possibility of feeding tubes, trachs, physical therapy and a week stay at the hospital.

The second procedure is what I chose. This consisted of removing over 2 inches of jawbone where the tumor was, through an incision on my neck. Removing a total of 5 teeth and replacing my jaw with a titanium plate for structure, while building my own jaw out of bone graft from my femur through an incision on my knee. This is an overnight stay at the hospital and being sent home with a walker for a couple of days.

Unfortunately, I was part of the small percentage where my bone graft and titanium plate structure failed. I lost majority of my graft from an infection and the titanium plate structure shifting due to swelling. I ultimately needed a second surgery to regain bone graft and fix the titanium plate. The second surgery resulted in multiple abscesses around the bone graft. I had to get an emergency I & D surgery to drain the infection which led to 5 days in the hospital. With the infection now at bay, I still don't have enough bone growth from the grafts to receive

implants. I've decided the fibula surgery in my case is the best option.

This unexpected diagnosis has been an everyday thought since this was brought to my attention in November of 2023. This has led so far to missing a total of 12 weeks of work, I've lost feeling in my lower lip and chin, I've lost 60 pounds during my healing stages of surgeries. I have a scar on my knee, my neck and will have one on my lower leg. I use my mouth a little differently when I speak. With the back-to-back infections, I've been on antibiotics since August 2024.

A lot of people would think surgery is the most extensive part.

Going through it, it's the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and financial part that is extensive. I am extremely grateful for what I had was benign and that this is what I have to go through.

In our country we have medicine and the tools to care for the reconstruction piece which is only part 1 but after the surgery people with this tumor need implants which are part 2. Typically, the surgeons who perform the surgery partner with your dental office to get the implants made. This second part is not covered by medical insurance, this would be under dental insurance and is considered cosmetic. This goes for both benign and malignant jaw tumors.

The reason why I'm taking my time and explaining my experience in great detail is because Ameloblastoma can be monumental for the person going through it. This is a journey taken blindly due to the lack of information out there. More information needs to be out there not only for the patient experiencing it but for the dentists, the doctors, and insurance companies. For something that medically has to be taken care of, doesn't make sense that your procedure from start to finish is not 100% covered by insurance, not only for benign jaw tumors but cancer patients who are enduring the same surgery. We need to bring more awareness and making a day for it is a great way to start. Thank you, members of the committee, for the time and the platform to speak. I would be happy to answer any questions if you have any.