



ARMED SERVICES, VETERANS  
AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC SAFETY  
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Today's Date 02/28/21

Name: JENNA VAN OOKEN

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Organization Representing: SELF

Testifying on Bill Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Testimony: \_\_\_\_\_ Verbal  Written \_\_\_\_\_ Both

Testifying As:  Proponent \_\_\_\_\_ Opponent \_\_\_\_\_ Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No

Special Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

To Whom it May Concern:

As a mother with a child on the autism spectrum, I fully support the need for this bill. Autistic children have a history of running/fleeing predominantly out of anxiety. When children are difficult to “break through” or “reason with” through verbal communication, the fear for their safety can become very real very quickly. My son had multiple encounters of running into the busy parking lot or down the neighbor street and panic set in quickly as the simple response of “stop” was lost on him.

If a neurodivergent child goes missing, imagine the fear and horror those family members feel. Now imagine if those parents could be backed by an entire community looking for their child at the same time. There is power in numbers! And when seconds count, it could make all the difference.

Jenna van Ooyen