

Good morning. It is an honor, and thank you so much for giving me time to speak to you today about an issue that is so important to many Ohio families and VERY personal to my family. I am Jim Tarantine, a Dublin Ohio resident and Hilliard Davidson high school parent.

This past weekend, I was able to attend the annual spring musical at Davidson, The Addams Family. At face value, this is a common, yearly, fun event at the school and it was a really good production. My daughter, Aria Tarantine, a junior at Davidson, was one of the featured dancers.

What made this musical extra special for us, like a lot of the amazing things Aria does, is that she sang, danced, and acted on stage 6 years after being treated for Ewing's Sarcoma cancer, a bone cancer on her skull. This is such a rare form of cancer that only around 3 kids in the US are diagnosed with it every year. A cancer that was treated with medicines that have been treating children for 30-50 years due to inadequate research funding. Radiation that took her hair permanently until she got a hair transplant this past summer, not covered by insurance by the way. A cancer that gave her the heart of a 50 year old, liver and kidney disease, hormones of a premenopausal woman, and of course the mental toll that she will be dealing with for the rest of her life.

Despite this, she continues to survive. She is an honors student, a band and winterguard member, a wonderful singer and actor, a two time Blue Jackets anthem singer, a Columbus Marathon patient champion, a National Honors Society member, and a future, and I know this is ironic, actuarial scientist.

But many friends of hers have not been blessed with these opportunities. In just the past couple years kids that shared the 12 floor with her at Nationwide Children's Hospital passed away. And this didn't have to happen. Pediatric cancer research is severely underfunded. You've all heard the statistics... children deserve more than 4% of cancer funding This is, literally, our future. These are the kids that will be in *your* seats and leading *our* state. These are our children and grandchildren and nieces and neighbors.

We all put the ribbon on, donate to wonderful charities, run a half marathon, shed a tear in the statehouse rotunda, but we have a REAL opportunity to make a difference for these Ohio children!!! Please fight for budgeting as much and more than is possible for these kids. Give smart Ohio researchers and doctors and universities the chance to develop medicines that will not only save lives, but help these kids live productive adult lives Let Ohio lead the way in protecting and saving children. Put politics and party aside and picture that kid that most of you know that deserves to live. It's in your hands. I'm happy to answer any questions you have. Thank you.