

Chairman Hillyer

Vice Chair Grendell

Ranking Member Galonski

Members of the Civil Justice Committee

Hello, my name is Sue Favaro and I live in Akron. I am a recent retiree of Lockheed Martin, having worked there thirty nine years. I am a widow and the mother of one son. I am writing this letter to show my support of House Bill 108. I am best friends with Cathy Morrison, the driving force behind this bill. This is an old, outdated law that needs to be changed.

Here is my story. I received a call from Cathy on Thanksgiving morning 2016, with the news of Candice's passing. Imagine losing a child on Thanksgiving Day. Later that day, she asked if I would accompany her to the funeral home the next day to help her with the arrangements. Friday morning we headed to the funeral home. You cannot imagine how devastating an ordeal it is to make arrangements for a child. It is not supposed to happen that way. Cathy did as well as expected. We painfully made our way through the process, telling him about Candice, her favorite color, her brothers and sister, everything about her. Towards the end of the meeting, Cathy told him she wished to have Candice cremated. That is when we were informed of this Ohio law. We had never heard of this. In the event of the death of a child, both parents must agree to cremation, even though this child was thirty years old. Cathy was devastated, to say the least. She totally fell apart. Candice's father had not been a part of her life for at least ten years, by his own choosing. Cathy had no information on him whatsoever, no address, not even a phone number. His own family did not know where he lived or how to contact him. The funeral director sympathized with her, but again stated that was what Ohio law says. He stated she could not put Candice to rest without the fathers consent. This is ridiculous.

Imagine being a single parent and suffering the loss of a child and being told that the absent parent must release the body before you can do anything to put her in her final resting place. This must be changed.

Several other families have reached out to Cathy with similar stories. I can only imagine how many more families have had this happen to them during the losses as a result of this year's pandemic.

This man chose to not be a part of his children's lives when they divorced. Cathy tried to encourage a relationship, to no avail. Also, Candice was thirty years old and had lived with her mother and sister her entire life. She had not even spoken to him in ten years.

I encourage you to support this bill so that no other single parent has to go through what I witnessed my friend go through. The whole experience was devastating.

Cathy started this campaign in 2017 and it has been a very long journey. This law needs to be changed.

I respectfully ask again for your support of House Bill 108.

Sincerely,

Sue Favaro

