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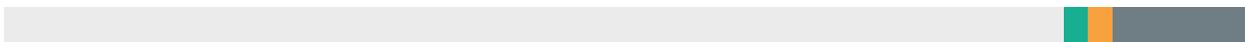
March 14, 2022

Dear Chairman Huffman,

I am an EMT with Jackson County EMS and was one of the responding medic units for the accident that caused burn injuries to Hunter Young. On April 4, 2021, we received a 911 run for a burn from racing fuel at the Jackson County Speedway. The initial responding medic unit arrived several minutes prior to my unit. Hunter Young has reached out and asked that I write a letter in support of S.B. 278. Hunter has directly given me permission to discuss his accident and treatment provided, to avoid any HIPPA concerns.

As my medic unit arrived to the scene, Hunter was already in the back of the 1st arriving medic unit. Hunter was 16 at the time and while racing sprint cars at the Jackson County Speedway, encountered a ruptured fuel line. While the 1st crew was working on getting an IV established for fluids and pain control, I assisted in cutting the clothing from Hunters body, flushing fluids on the wounds to get the debris out of them. I then wrapped the burns. This was a very emotional situation for Hunter, who was in pain, and a lot of people doing lifesaving measures quickly around him. I share empathy for all burn victims I have treated, cared for or transported in 22 years in fire and EMS.

While the other EMT and 2 Medics were treating Hunter, I made eye contact with him and began to talk and assure him that he was getting the best care and would be transported by helicopter. Being in a motor vehicle accident, being burned and being a teenager are all events that are traumatic together. Hunter experienced all three of these at the same time. Awaiting MedFlight for transport to Columbus Children's Hospital, we continued to care for Hunter. He advised the fuel line had likely ruptured and the burn temperature for the specific race fuel sprint cars has is significantly increased from normal daily fuel.



Hunter had burns on his lower legs, feet, hands, knuckles and the skin was coming off parts of his lower legs/feet. As everyone worked on him, Hunter and I talked, so he did not feel all alone. The traumatic nature of these burns was relived day after day for the better part of a year after his accident. Hunter was wearing all the right personal protective equipment, a fire resistant jump suit, gloves and shoes designed to give an individual time to escape during an accident. The type of fuel used burns hot and an extended time to exit his race car likely caused the degradation of his fire suit.

Awareness for burn victims, their struggle, recovery and the mitigation and prevention of are all significantly important. By having a dedicated time to recognize the burn victims, their accidents and the tremendous burden on a family should be made. I followed up several times with Hunters parents to see how he was doing. This young man has gone through multiple surgeries, physical therapy to walk again, skin grafts with an array of other medical procedures. The psychological trauma, the visible scars are much harder to forget about moving through daily life.

In addition to Jackson County EMS, I am the fire prevention officer for the Scioto Township Fire Department. S.B. 278 will allow the first responders, firefighters, EMT's to unite in the same time frame to educate the residents in their coverage areas. I see burns, smoke inhalation or injuries that likely could have been mitigated with fire safety awareness and prevention. This recognition will enable all Ohioans to become more aware of burn injuries and how to best prevent them, respond to them and support their resilience during recovery.

I have discussed this incident with the other 3 EMS personnel that responded to Hunters accident. All four of us vehemently support Ohio Burn Awareness Week. I encourage you to reach out for more information for this bill.

Sincerely,



Russell D. Aikman
Firefighter/EMT

- Scioto Township Fire Department
- EMT Jackson County EMS