

11-8-21

Dear Chairman Manning, Vice Chair McColley and Ranking Member Thomas,

Thank you for taking your time to read my letter of support for SB 216 – Dylan’s Law. I was a juror in the case against Dylan’s parents Daniel and Jessica Groves, for murdering their infant son. I had never served as a juror and to be honest, did not know much about the judicial system or about Scioto County Children Services. That quickly changed. What I took away from serving as a juror was that the need for change is evident. From laws, policies, rules, procedures, change needs to happen so no child is murdered again. Every single child needs protected, every single child needs to be loved, and every single child needs the chance to grow up. Dylan’s chances were cut short due to the fact he was given back to a parent, that 12 days earlier was unfit to take care of him.

Reunification is the CPS ultimate goal. This goal is obtainable if new procedures, policies and law are put in place. Reunification with a parent whom the child was taken from 12 days earlier is not the answer. There was one mishap after another in Dylan’s short time on earth, ones that ultimately cost him his precious life. We need to do better, be better advocates for those who cannot advocate for themselves.

SB 216 – Dylan’s Law, if passed, will protect the children who have been taken from their drug addicted parent so they may receive proper care, treatment for their addiction and mental health services before reunified with their child. Rushing reunification is not the answer, SB 216 could prevent another tragedy. I would never want my worst enemy to be a juror for a murder of an infant child. I will never forget the images and I will never forget the horror I heard. I pray you will support this bill and that Dylan Groves did not die in vain.

Thank you for your time,

Deborah Daniels