

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

I am writing this letter to encourage you to support SB 216-Dylan's Law. I have been a teacher in Scioto County for 24 years, and there have been countless times I have seen innocent children reunited with their parents too quickly. It was obvious these children were going back to an unsafe environment, but because of the law, there was nothing that could be done. That's why I feel so strongly about this.

Here is one example out of many. I remember being on the phone for an hour after school, begging CPS to just give this one child more time in his foster home, where he was flourishing. CPS agreed with me, but their hands were tied because of the law. This child was reunited with his mother, and he was put back into the foster system within a matter of weeks because she was back on drugs. He didn't go back to the wonderful foster home he SHOULD have stayed in. I have no clue where he ended up and I have thought about this child so many times over the years. This is just one example of the many kids I have worried about when they have been reunited with their parents too soon.

I am friends with Andrea Tackett, Dylan's foster mom. I remember when she got the call that they were sending Dylan back to his father. It wasn't even 2 weeks. No parent can prove they are ready to have their child back within a matter of days. It was shocking! We knew it was a dangerous environment to send him to, but because of the way the law is written, it couldn't be prevented. This innocent, precious baby was sent back to a family too soon and suffered horribly before being murdered and dumped in a well. This should have NEVER happened and I pray that this law will prevent this from happening to any child ever again. I will never understand why Dylan had to endure what he did, but I am praying this law will pass and will save so many other lives.

Thank you for your time,

Melanie Ramey