

**Ohio House Health Committee June 18 , 2018**

**Proponent testimony for HB 167 aka Daniels Law by Scott Weidle**

**Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gaverone, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Ohio House Health Committee.**

**My name is Scott Weidle. Daniel was my first born son that lost his battle with the Primary Medical Brain disease caused by Opioid Addiction.**

**Opioid Addiction disease is chronic and progressive. If left untreated is often fatal. 80 % of Opiate addiction started with Prescription Opioids. Ohio is the leader in the Nation in Prescription Opioid deaths 2015 and 2016 as reported by the Kaiser Family Foundation.**

**Daniels disease was triggered by Prescription Opioids. Daniel worked full time for our 55 year old family business for 12 years. Daniel was our only business succession plan. I worked with Daniel every day. He was a full time working functional adult and relied heavily on his faith during his toughest times. One weekend several years ago he called me crying and asked me to come to his home. I did right away. He told me of his problem and he ask for my help in finding him help. I was caught off guard. I searched nonstop for two days to find the best residential rehab I could. He was on a plane within a few days voluntarily.**

**Once home, Daniel slowly recognized he was struggling again. Daniel tried the partial agonist MAT called Suboxone on several occasions but they did not work out for several reasons. He was desperate for help. He told me several times I don't know why this is happening. He started searching for alternative MAT options. He then discovered the underutilized MAT, an antagonist, trade name Vivitrol. A medication that during these 6 years of his battle was NEVER offered to him. He asked me my opinion and I told him I supported that if that's what he felt he needed to try because Daniel was desperate to beat this**

**disease. No different than a cancer patient fighting for his life. Im proud of the fight Daniel fought.**

**Daniel found a clinic one hour from home and he started on the Vivitrol once a month injection. Two weeks in he told me "Dad for the first time in a very long time I do not have cravings for opioids". That was such a good thing to hear. Daniel went on for 8 months of opioid free life. WE were again hopeful**

**But then his physician's office called and canceled his appointment. They said the doctor had taken a leave and told him to call back in a few days for an update. Daniel did several times and was not offered any appointment date. On the last call to this office I was with Daniel. I had Daniel ask the office person if we could pick up his medication and we would find a doctor to administer it. The office person said I do not know where its kept. Daniel told him it is in the refrigerator with my name on it. The office person went and looked , reported to Daniel yes it was there and had your name on it. But he was told NO you can't have it and did not know when the doc may return.**

**The next day I called the Montgomery County Public Health District Drug and Alcohol Addiction Services called CADAS . I told them the scenario and asked them to find us a doctor to continue Daniels 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive Vivitrol injection. They said they would. They called back two days later and said we are sorry we cannot find a physician. I was floored and we started to panic**

**Over the next couple weeks we asked 2 OBOT physicians for Vivitrol help and were denied. On Dec 12 he asked his Primary care physician for help with Vivitrol and was also denied.**

**On Dec 26, Daniel posted on his Face Book: Vivitrol is great , but they make it so damn hard to get.**

**On that same day 12 hours later my son lost his battle with this disease.**

**That is my sons tragic story that was avoidable and should not have happened. This is what I call the Medical Discrimination of the Disease of Addiction.**

**15 years ago we could not go to a Pharmacy for a flu shot. Today 1000s of lives have been saved because we made this medication much more accessible through the pharmacy profession. Greater access to non-controlled substances such as a long term antagonist opioid medications would be a giant step forward in this epidemic.**

**Let's make Ohio a leader in treatment options and prescription opioid reforms instead of being the leader in the Nation in Prescription Opioid and Opiate deaths.**

**HB 167 is a step forward and I urge your support and passage. This would have saved Daniels Life and it will save others once in place.**

**There is much more that needs done with this crisis. Such as requiring patient evaluations before opioids are dispensed. Create standards for this evaluation step. Reduce new addictions by restricting long term opioid use dispensed out of the Primary Care setting. Empower the SMB to use OARRS for monitoring opioid dispensing habits.**

**I wish to thank my son Daniel for teaching me about your disease. Because I was on the wrong side of the fence during the early stages of your battle.**

**I wish to apologize to my son Daniel for not "fighting as hard as you did." For not finding you the medication that offered you a "Pro Life" chance at beating this disease.**

**Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gaverone, Ranking member Antonio and members of this committee Thank you for your time, your efforts and support of HB 167 also known as Daniels Law. DanielsStory.org**