Heather Leiterman

160 North Wall St. unit 305

Columbus, OH 43215

Cell phone 614-962-1333

Dear committee members,

I am a proud blind mother of three incredible young adults! I am veryPleased to have been one of the most influential people in their lives. Unknowing to me shortly after the birth of my oldest son a well-meaning nurse contacted social services at the hospital because she didn’t understand how this young blonde woman and her blind family could raise this beautiful newborn baby.

I was not aware that she had done this until after my discharge papers were signed I attempted to walk out of my room. I was politely stopped by a nurse and told I was not allowed to leave my room nor the hospital until I had been spoken to by a hospital social worker. When I asked why I needed to speak with a social worker I was told “because you’re blind quote I quickly called my Doctor Who just happened to be the doctor that delivered me and explained the situation. He arrived at my hospital room moments after the social worker out of breath asking why I was being detained. The social worker explained that a nurse had concerns since myself, the babies father and my extended family were all blind.

My doctor told the social worker if he had any concerns he would have called her himself. He then went on to explain he had been the doctor to deliver me and had watched me grow into the young woman she saw before her. He told her that just because I was blind did not make me any less of a mother. I did many new mothers do I read books, asked other mothers I knew, talk to my doctor and pediatrician and attended parenting classes. Thankfully we were able to delay her concerns and I was able to leave the hospital with a beautiful baby boy.

Because of situations like mine and so many others I urge you to pass HB 309 so no other blind parent has to go through this.

Many thanks,

Heather Leiterman