Ohio House Health Committee

November 5, 2019

Proponent Testimony HB 188

Prohibit blindness from denying or limiting care of minor

Submitted by Marianne Denning

Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Boyd, and Members of the Ohio House Health Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 188.

I am Marianne Denning, a proud mother of 3 sons. I have been blind all of my life and always worried about how I would be treated when I had children. Sadly, my fears were confirmed shortly after the birth of my oldest son. At that time, babies were kept in a nursery and brought out to mothers for feeding. When my son was brought to me the first time the woman who brought him remained in my room. I asked her to leave and she told me she could not because I might harm my baby and she needed to stay to protect him. I was very tired so decided I would talk to my doctor the next day. Fortunately, a nurse followed the woman into the room and told her to leave and the nurse would accept responsibility. The nurse promptly left so I had time alone to get to know my son. The next time I saw the nurse I thanked her, and she told me she had a daughter who was blind and hoped someone would do the same for her someday. I cannot tell you how I felt when this happened. It confirmed all of my fears. I have had many people question my ability to raise my sons over the years, but none devastated me like that first experience with my first son.

My sons are all adults, now. My oldest son owns his own business and has several employees. My middle son is a high school teacher who loves educating our future leaders. My youngest son has been in the Air Force for over 12 years and is planning to stay until his retirement.

Please pass this legislation so blind parents can raise our children with confidence that no one will try to interfere with us based on our loss of vision.

Sincerely,

Marianne Denning

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October 28, 2019