

Testimony of
Nicole C. Morrissette
Public Health Committee
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Good morning Senator Handly; Senator Sayers and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Nicole Morrissette, and I am a 16 year old from Wethersfield. I am here today on behalf of Senate Bill 673, an act concerning health insurance coverage for bone marrow testing.

Two years ago all I knew about Leukemia was that it was a type of cancer. Unfortunately since then leukemia has made a big impact on my life. Two people I am very close to have been diagnosed with this disease. The first was my teacher Mrs. Gallivan. She was 25 years old and in a matter of days she went from teaching English and coaching tennis to being diagnosed with this disease, and

having to move to Boston's Dana Farber Cancer Institute where she could receive the best treatment. The second person is Sue Lyons. She is my mom's best friend, my neighbor, and someone who is like a second mother to me. Sue was also transferred to Boston right after she was diagnosed. Both Mrs. Gallivan and Sue needed bone marrow transplants to save their lives. Before that however they needed to go through the process of finding a donor. Sue had a bone marrow drive that was held @ the Wethersfield Country Club, and Mrs. Gallivan had drives at Wethersfield High School and two in Massachusetts. The difference between these drives is at the drives in CT; the people who wanted to join the Bone Marrow Registry had to pay over 60 dollars, and in Mass. The cost was covered by insurance. Over 17,000 people in CT will be diagnosed with Cancer this year. Many of these will be cancer of the blood

like leukemia where a bone marrow transplant could save their lives. Cancer is something that is extremely emotionally stressful not only on the patient but also on the family members and friends. When you're going through this kind of stress you don't want to be worrying about the financial aspect. Knowing Mrs. Gallivan and Sue forced me to realize that life can change any minute and this could be me or you. The financial coverage through Insurance needs to be addressed by this state.

I urge your support of this Bill. Thank you.