

301

AUTISM VOTES
SB 301
FEBRUARY 5, 2009

My name is Phyllis Starkel, Grandmother of 11 year old Molly Sullivan Starkel a student at the Gengras Learning Center in West Hartford CT. My husband and I are here to support SB 301 and help to make it a reality.

With us today is our granddaughter Michaela Harbec, a freshman at Bolton High School, Bolton Ct. Michaela has chosen to research Autism for her Health Class paper. This shows the interest and involvement of all family members.

Molly is one of the bright lights on the Autism Spectrum, who along with parents and family members suffer from the emotional and exhausting physical stress of Autism. She has experienced shunning from classmates at her previous school, not being included in birthday parties with the other girls and expressing how much she missed going. The extensive and sometimes painful blood tests, hospital and doctor visits.

The most emotional moment was when, with a very serious face she asked me what happened to her when she was born and why she wasn't like the other kids !

The worry of expenses if you are not fortunate enough to have health insurance, and if you do, there are generally caps on the services most needed, limited number of office visits for the special services, such as Occupational and Physical Therapy. The exorbitant cost for Autism Physicians, medications, educational materials, possible co-pays, and transportation to out of area Physicians and Hospitals.

Please give the importance of this bill SB 301 your time and consideration.

Thank you for this opportunity to share Molly's life with you.

The Starkel Family
Columbia, Ct