

Public Health Committee  
HB 6200

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I would like to add my strong testimony in support of this bill.

I have been a public school teacher in Danbury for the past 24 years.

I am a single mother to a 14 year old boy named Nicholas who I adopted at age 3 from the state of Connecticut (he was a foster child).

Nicholas has a very long history of psychiatric hospitalizations going back to the age of 2.

He has been in Four Winds Hospital about 6 times, St Francis Hospital in Hartford, Natchaug Hospital,

St Raphael's Hospital twice, Hall Brooke Hospital in Westport for 6 months and he was taken to Danbury Hospital and remained in the adult unit for 4 weeks after attempting to kill someone. He has also been treated as an out patient at Yale and has been in more Emergency Rooms in more hospitals than I could possibly count. He has also been treated for "seizure like activity" in his brain at White Plains Hospital and Westchester Hospital.

I was told when he was six years old that he when he got a little bigger he would have to be institutionalized for the rest of his life. I was informed that he would be managed in an institution with daily chemical and physical restraints because of his frequent violent outbursts.

These outbursts could consist of anything from smashing furniture, biting his own arms until they would bleed, smashing his head into walls, attacking other people or attempting to jump out of windows or moving vehicles or to run into oncoming traffic.

He has been diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Reactive attachment Disorder, Intermittent Explosive Disorder, ADHD, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder as well as Lyme Disease, Babesiosis and Mycoplasma Fermentas.

He had been to countless doctors, ER's and hospitals and had been on many different cocktails of psychiatric medications before he was finally treated for Lyme and its coinfections.

Long term treatment of antibiotics literally turned this child's life around.

Without such treatment he would spend the rest of his life in an institution on chemical and physical restraints.

I can not in this simple format to tell you everything that he and I have been through.

The role of Lyme disease in psychiatric disorders like Bipolar is not well understood but I have witnessed it first hand.

My son is still on antibiotics and it is a scary thought to think about where he might be without treatment.

I urge you all, for the sake of my son Nicholas and for all children and adults who suffer from psychiatric disorders caused or made worse by Lyme and it's coinfections, especially for the many people who have not yet been diagnosed, I urge you all to find it in your hearts to support this bill.

Thank you  
Donna Marie Benner