

February 6, 2009

Carrie A. Smith  
94 Hayestown Road  
Danbury, CT 06811

Dear Distinguished Members of the Health Committee:

My name is Carrie Smith. I am a 28 year old Connecticut resident diagnosed with Crohn's disease 5 years ago, although I have been suffering with it for most of my adult life. I am writing to support the Connecticut Restroom Act Bill 6328 proposed by Representative Joe Taborsak. This Bill is a compassionate and humane resolution for diseases that are so rarely talked about.

Having been denied the use of a bathroom in the past, I have first hand experience of being completely humiliated and scared, as well as, unsure of what to do or where to go. I could not defend myself or explain the emergency; there simply was not enough time. This pain could have been avoided for me and many others with the availability of a restroom for situations that are in fact uncontrollable.

When I travel on the highway, I do not mark the distance by the mileage on my odometer, but by each construction site I pass with a portable toilet available. I think to myself, "That toilet was 5 miles away, if something happens I just have to wait that long." My friends and family understand what I go through because they see it first hand. Their support is unconditional. It is the compassion and support of a stranger that I am asking for today. You can be certain that this would only be used in the most dire of circumstances and never taken for granted. Those afflicted with these diseases would most certainly prefer to be in the privacy of their own home every time an attack occurs, but what kind of life would that be? I know that I can easily go to the mall or movie theater and have a facility available, but I cannot walk down Main Street without constant anxiety or fear that I may all of a sudden have excruciating pain and/or an accident because a public facility is not available. The lack of control of your body is utterly indescribable.

This legislation would be a fair resolution for all parties, and it imposes little or no real burden to retail establishments or store owners. The passing of this Bill will be a huge victory for the livelihood of those afflicted. It would allow me to go to new places, stores, etc. without fear. Allow me to plan my day like the average person and take a simple walk without anxiety. Please do all you can to pass this Bill and allow me and others to live a normal life outside the walls of my home.

Thank you for your time,

Carrie A Smith