

Dear Respected Committee Members:

I am writing to you as a mother whose child has endured a major life change upon being diagnosed with the illness known as Crohn's disease. My daughter, Aimee, was diagnosed her first semester away at college. She was 2 1/2 hours away and there were many trips to meet her at the emergency room of the local hospital at all hours of the day and night. Not knowing what ailment she had until the diagnosis was a terrifying time in our lives. Upon receiving the diagnosis came another struggle. How to cope with this illness while at school, away from home and without familiar medical attention. Crohn's is a very cruel illness. It affects so many of all ages in so many different ways. There is not one certain rule that can be applied to this illness. What works for one or many may not work for many others. Each individual is affected in their own way.

There are a couple of very difficult areas to address with this illness. The first is food intake. As I mentioned above, each person is affected differently. What one can eat, others can not. My daughter is one of the less fortunate ones in that she is not able to eat any fruit or vegetables (very limited to 2 or 3 during a period of time), no fried foods or foods with certain spices. There are too many details involved in discussing the after effects of eating the wrong foods.

This is where this bill comes into effect. There is never a determined time when my daughter will have "an attack" and need a restroom. It does not pick a time or location, it can happen anytime, anywhere. There is always so much stress in planning to travel because of bathroom anxiety. Not knowing if when an attack occurs, whether or not you will be able to find a restroom that is available to you.

This bill will allow many individuals that suffer from Crohn's and other Inflammatory Bowel Diseases the ability to travel with much less stress and bathroom anxiety knowing that they will have a bathroom available to them if needed...anytime, anywhere.

Please, please consider passing this very important bill. It will save so many from embarrassing situations and allow them the freedom they deserve to be able to live their lives to the fullest.

Thank you in advance and may God Bless you and your families.

Mary Clavette
Sandy Hook, CT