

March 18, 2009

Dear Senator Jonathan Harris, Representative Elizabeth Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee,

I would like to take this time to express my support of section 5 of CT Bill 678 – requiring any “physician or other health care provider who provides health care services to a pregnant woman during the last trimester of her pregnancy, which health care services are directly related to her pregnancy, shall provide the woman with timely, relevant and appropriate information sufficient to allow her to make an informed and voluntary choice regarding options to bank or donate umbilical cord blood following the delivery of a newborn child.”

While I pregnant, my physician only gave me information on who to contact if I wanted to bank my child’s cord blood in a private bank that possibly could be used someday if my child was sick.

In my last trimester, I learned of a family who needed a transplant but they could not find a match in the national bone marrow registry. They were searching for stem cells in a public bank. This is how I found out that cord blood could be donated to a public bank.

Immediately after finding out from this family that cord blood could be donated, I looked into it further. Ultimately, I was told that I was too late in my pregnancy. I would have had to fill out the paperwork and send it in before my 32nd week of pregnancy.

Unfortunately my child’s cord blood was just discarded when it could have saved a life. My wish is that all doctors would inform patients of the opportunity to donate their child’s cord blood and help save a life.

Stacy Kopso
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