

My name is Brooke Drum and I am before you to urge your support of Senate Bill 312- an act that proposes to remove the age cap on insurance coverage of medically necessary formulas.

My daughter, Olivia, is a bright and active eleven year old who is on a specialized formula called Neocate due to a disease called Eosinophilic Gastroenteritis. Olivia's disease means that she periodically becomes allergic to all food in general, and that has resulted in total elimination diets in the past. Neocate is her primary source of nutrition. Even when we are able to incorporate a few foods into her diet, Neocate provides the necessary protein in a form that she can absorb without reaction. A reaction for Olivia results in inflammation and edema of her entire digestive tract. White blood cells flood the lining of her GI tract from esophagus to the end. This prevents absorption of nutrients necessary for survival, growth and development, as well as organ function. Gradual malnutrition occurs and vitamin deficiencies such rickets and scurvy occur. Anemia develops and red cells diminish to the point that it is difficult for them to carry oxygen and nutrients to support organ function. This situation, if not managed with Neocate, can result in hospitalization, further medical intervention and unnecessary cost to the medical system.

At the time she was diagnosed in 2001, she had a feeding tube inserted and her formula was covered under infusion therapy benefits. Once that feeding tube was removed and she began oral intake of the formula, coverage of her formula ceased because she was over the age of three and because she was *drinking* the Neocate.

Currently, if Neocate is purchased directly from the manufacturer it costs \$973.00 for a month's prescription. Anthem pays an outside distribution company \$447.20 more to package and deliver it to us *monthly*. So they are paying \$1420.71 a month versus \$973.00. With decisions like that, it's no wonder the healthcare system is in shambles.

As I was writing this, and in speaking with other impacted families, I began to think we need a "Dave" moment- the movie where Kevin Kline pretends to be the president because he is his doppelganger, and he overhauls the entire federal budget. We need a Dave to look at health insurance companies and their practices. When we have insurance companies whining about the cost of healthcare, and then paying out over \$400 for a cardboard box and one phone call a month from a sweet lady down in Tennessee to place a reorder, that begs a closer look, in my opinion.