

Written Testimony of:

Amanda Danielle Faught

March 2, 2011

Public Health Hearing

Senator Stillman, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee,

I am submitting the following testimony in support of House Bill #6481.

As a young woman living with lupus, I can speak first hand about the complications, and the physical and emotional implications that come with the disease. I was a young, active college student when I first got sick 7 years ago. What started as headaches and fatigue, turned into a life-changing experience. From hair and memory loss, to crippling pain and weight loss, the disease is merciless. Over the last 7 years, I have aged about 70. The pain, stiffness and fatigue I face on a daily basis is at best, limiting. At its worst, it is debilitating. While I have learned to be strong, prioritize my life and deal with the symptoms the best way I know, one of the most difficult aspects of dealing with the disease is the lack of awareness about it.

Without understanding, there is no compassion. Without compassion, there is no sense of community. Without a community, people suffering from lupus are left alone in the fight against this crippling disease.

This bill is a means to giving us the voice we need. We deserve to be heard, and we deserve the chance to be understood and to continue working toward a better quality of life.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation. I believe it will have a positive impact on the lives of patients living with lupus in Connecticut.

Amanda Faught