

March 7, 2012

Testimony
Public Health Committee
Support for Raised Bill Number 56
An Act Concerning Pulse Oximetry Screening for Newborn Infants

Submitted By: Mindi Davidson

Good Morning,

My name is Mindi Davidson and I came here today to tell you why I support the addition of CCHD to CT's newborn screening panel.

I was a healthy 30 year old female when I became pregnant with triplets. 8 weeks into the pregnancy, we lost one baby. There was no known cause. From there, I had a problem free pregnancy until I was approx 28 weeks, and my water broke. I was admitted into the hospital and put on bed rest from then on while they tried to enhance and grow their lungs. At approx. 30 weeks, the twins could not stay in any longer and were born via emergency c-section. It was at that moment, my life changed forever.

Each twin had their own health issues, but my son, Evan, was born with a Ventricle Septic Defect, a form of CCHD. This particular defect required immediate decisions within 24 hours of birth. Let me back up for a moment. From the minute the twins were born, they left the operating room. I never even caught a glimpse of what they looked like. When I got back to my hospital room, it was about 15 hours before I could see them **for the first time**. From there, it was only through the glass of the NICU, I could not even go in. I was starting to feel awful, so I went back to my room where it was eventually determined that I had an infection that needed immediate care. As my nurses were dealing with my fever and symptoms and my husband was going back and forth from the NICU and my room, the on call Peds doctor came in looking very grave. They are at 18 hours old at this point. I immediately began to cry, fearing the worst.

He explained that Evan had a heart defect and that his heart was essentially not working properly and he was fighting to just breathe. He has a hole in his heart, the doctor told me, and we need to decide to operate or see if he survives without the surgery. Please, for a moment, just close your eyes and imagine. You are sick, feeling awful from surgery and sickness, you have not held your newborn twins, let alone even come close to seeing what they look like....what their eye color is, and you have to decide if you want to crack open your son's chest and operate. Right there, right then....what do you want to do? And by the way? We are talking about an infant that is only 3 ½ pounds. Can he even survive the surgery? What happens if we chose not to do it? What happens if we do?

That fear, that cold ice that fills you from your head, through your finger tips, to your toes, takes over. You can't call your family to help make the decision, you can't google out the symptoms and the

process, you are alone, scared, and your son's life is quite literally in your hands. And yet, you still have not held him.

So, I am here today to make sure no mom or dad goes home from the hospital without knowing. This simple test, this non invasive little sensor will stop so many painful decisions, so many tears, by just determining the O2 saturation in the babies' blood. This simple, painless test. It can do so much...please help other families to not have to go through what we did. Let them decide without the emergency. Let them hold their child, look into their eyes, be informed, with just this simple test.

I urge Connecticut's legislature to pass Raised S.B. 56. So every baby can receive Critical Congenital Heart Disease screening upon birth.