

# The Bocompani Family, Five Partridge Trail, Sherman, CT

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March 1, 2012

Senator Terry Geratana and Representative Betsy Ritter  
Co-Chairs, Public Health Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3003 & 3004  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

RE: Support for Bill #RHB 56

Dear Senator Geratana and Representative Ritter:

As friends and supporters of Marie Hatcher's herculean efforts to raise awareness and funding for Congenital Heart Defects, we are proud to support Bill #RHB 56. This important piece of legislation, hopefully to be renamed to 'Matthew & Faith's Law', would make Pulse Oximetry testing a requirement for all newborns, prior to leaving the hospital.

Congenital Heart Defects (CHD) is the #1 Birth Defect affecting 40,000 babies annually. Half of the babies with CHD are diagnosed in utero, but the other half can go undiagnosed for days, weeks, months and sometimes years, with dire consequences. In fact, at this very moment, babies are being discharged from hospitals with a hidden disease that could take their lives. The Hatcher's son Matthew is a CHD Warrior. Matthew, diagnosed in utero, has undergone three open-heart surgeries and three cardiac cath in his short life of three and a half years. He currently takes eight doses of medicine a day and is doing very well in big part to the excellent team of doctors and nurses and his early diagnosis. Heartbreakingly, thousands of other CHD babies are not as fortunate and sadly, CHD Angel, Faith lost her fight at only the age of two.

At best, the missed diagnosis of newborns with CHD will result in surgical compromise, neurological impairment, developmental delay, organ failure, and long-term feeding issues...all at huge costs to the healthcare system. Additionally, physicians, hospitals, and advocates clearly understand the importance of early detection of newborn diseases and disorders in saving lives and reducing healthcare cost burdens associated with late diagnosis.

There is solution available for this problem; a simple Pulse Oximetry Test, which costs approximately \$1, is a cost-effective, non-invasive means of testing for CHD. Pulse Oximetry, considered the fifth vital sign, is a test routinely done on any adult with the slightest ailment or injury, including mothers during labor and delivery. Remarkably, their babies, who just ventured into this world and are breathing oxygen for the first time ever, are not tested. This testing needs to become a standard of care for all newborns, prior to discharge.

Therefore, we urge you to leverage your leadership and expertise in public health to support this important Bill. **Bill # RHB 56 will save lives, it is that simple!!** Please let Connecticut join New Jersey and Indiana, as the current states with this important law and the many other states moving quickly to mandate this simple test to benefit newborns throughout the United States.

Sincerely,

*Robert & Amy Bocompani*

cc: Senator Gayle Slossberg, Vice-Chair, Public Health Committee  
Representative Christopher Lyddy, Vice-Chair, Public Health Committee  
Senator Jason Welch, Ranking Member, Public Health Committee  
Representative Jason Perillo, Ranking Member, Public Health Committee



Raising hope, one and a half  
hearts at a time