



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Insurance and Real Estate Public Hearing 2-26-13

Proposed S.B. No. 956 An Act Concerning Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated With Streptococcal Infections.

Dear Chairman Crisco, Chairman Megna, Ranking Members Kelly and Sampson and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee,

I testify today in support of Senate Bill 956 An Act Concerning Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated With Streptococcal Infections. If adopted this legislation would amend the General Statutes to require health insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with streptococcal infections and would require the Department of Public Health to develop programs and promote research on pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with streptococcal infections.

Included in the state's 2012 Budget, a \$40,000 grant to Yale University represented a great step forward, providing funds for research for improved diagnoses and treatment, as well as an evaluation of the level of recognition of the disorder within the medical community. This critical step forward was done in a bipartisan manner and made possible with Senator Witkos' leadership. While we have made valuable progress on this issue, there remains greater advancement yet to be made.

Families all across the country and the state of Connecticut are dealing with the disorder as well as the enormous financial and emotional costs that come with it. While improving the level of awareness and education regarding PANDAS within the medical community is absolutely vital, this bill would help to alleviate the financial burden suffered by PANDAS families while also encouraging new research.

A constituent of mine, a mother of a child with PANDAS, informed me of this important public health issue. Her family and child have been devastated by years of misdiagnosis and have suffered great developmental, emotional and financial harm as a lack of appropriate resources and care persists. To this day they are forced to go out of state to find appropriate treatment. To ensure PANDAS families are not forced to deal with the costs of this disorder alone, I encourage the committee to support this bill.

I thank you for your indulgence and consideration of this legislation and am open to any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rep. Geoff Luxenberg
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Manchester, CT