

March 4, 2014

Re: In support of SB-325 (LCO 1369); An Act Concerning Medicaid Recipients With Complex Medical Needs

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for your time today. My name is Deborah Zinzalet and I am here today to tell you a little more about my daughter Alexis Charbonneau and how having an Power Wheelchair is a necessity in her life. Alexis was born on November 16, 2001 and is now 12 years old and has had 72 fractures since she was born. Having the Permobil chair today allows her some independence.

Alexis was born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta (Brittle Bone Disease) and she has one of the severe types of this condition. With this disease the body doesn't produce collagen, which is the cement of the bone structure. So what happens is moving the wrong way, sneezing or coughing, Alexis could fracture. So having to operate a manual chair is NOT an option.

Alexis will never be able to walk and she depends on this wheelchair as her legs. With her arms being so badly deformed from all her fractures, it would be impossible for her to get around school and our home in a manual chair. She doesn't have the strength or the ability to use a manual chair. A manual wheelchair may cause her more harm and what happens if she does break her arm again, she won't be able to get around at all.

Lexi could never stop or move the chair manually
Lexi's Permobil Chair goes to the ground and extends so can reach things
She is a very small framed girl at 12 she is 3 ft and 48 pounds.

For an individual that can't walk or move, these complex wheelchairs give disabled people the independence they need. The wheelchairs also have seating systems that help position the person to help minimized more medical problems. This equipment helps their doctors address the many medical complications that come with a disability and helps the state keep healthcare costs down.

Every person's needs are different so we should allow people with disabilities to get the equipment they need to help with their healthcare needs and try to lead some sort of independent life.

This wheelchair means everything for Alexis.

We support passage of Senate Bill 325.

Thank you,

Deborah Zinzalet
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