

**Testimony**  
**Public Health Committee**  
**Proposed House Bill # 5525 An Act Concerning Cytomegalovirus**  
**Friday, February 20, 2015**

To the Chairs, Senator Gerratana and Representative Ritter, distinguished vice-chairs, Senator Crisco and Representative Riley, ranking members, Senator Markley and Representative Srinivasan, and committee members:

I am Rebecca M. Ghazi, grandmother of Madeline Armstrong and Vice-President and Co-Founder of Maddie's Mission, Katy, TX. As an individual who has been personally touched by the devastating effects of congenital CMV, I am in support of **H.B. 5525: AN ACT CONCERNING CYTOMEGALOVIRUS**.

Madeline Leigh Armstrong was born on January 31, 2014. She died due to complications of congenital Cytomegalovirus (cCMV) when she was 12 days old. We had never heard of CMV until one hour after she was born. CMV is the most common, yet least known, **preventable** viral cause of permanent disabilities in newborns. Maddie's Mission was founded in March, 2014 shortly after the death of Maddie. Our mission is to raise awareness of the potential harmful effects of CMV during pregnancy, to educate families about prevention measures, and to support CMV research with fundraising.

While CMV counseling is recommended by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG), fewer than 50% of obstetricians even mention CMV to their patients. Of the pregnant women that we have talked to and women in general, **no one** has heard of CMV. This can go on no longer. Women must be educated about this devastating virus called CMV in order to protect their unborn babies. We do not want other families to suffer as we have with our loss of Maddie. Knowledge is the key to no more CMV. Research has shown that when hygienic steps are followed the occurrence of cCMV is reduced by 50%. **We have worked hard this past year, but we alone cannot educate all pregnant women.**

State policy to mandate education for pregnant women and CMV screening for at risk newborns to minimize the incidence and severity of congenital CMV disease is imperative.

For more information about CMV, you can visit [www.cdc.gov/cmV](http://www.cdc.gov/cmV) or print a CDC flyer at: <http://congenitalcmv.org/CDCbrochure.pdf>

Thank you for your service to the state of Connecticut. Please support **H.B. 5525: AN ACT CONCERNING CYTOMEGALOVIRUS**

Sincerely,

Rebecca M. Ghazi  
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