



February 17, 2016

Dear Honorable Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee;

My name is Wendy Nawara and I am the President and Executive Director of PANDAS/PANS Advocacy and Support (PAS). Our organization is located in Illinois, however we have recently focused our efforts on much needed grant giving to PANDAS/PANS families throughout the US. In addition, along with other states, we also are working on legislation similar to SB37.

I would like to convey my whole hearted support of SB37. There truly is no reason strong enough to deny a full range of health insurance coverage for the children of Connecticut, as well as the entire US. Simply put, the many children and young adults with PANDAS/PANS are very sick and require your immediate attention. Without adequate treatment, PANDAS/PANS can lead to debilitating, possibly life-long chronic illness in both the mental health and physical health realms for these kids. The current and future strains on the educational system, the mental health system, the insurance system, and even the judicial system need to be considered.

Both the National Institute of Mental Health and the PANDAS Physicians Network have laid out a Standard of Care (see <https://www.pandasppn.org>) for treating the most moderate to severely presenting children, and it includes IVIG, plasmapheresis, and prophylactic antibiotics. But our families can not get these treatments covered by insurance consistently. Instead, your constituents must pay out of pocket; often times finding themselves very unprepared for the financial and emotional toll PANDAS/PANS can wreak.

I urge you to pass SB37 without delay.

With gratitude,

Wendy Nawara, MSW
President and Executive Director
PANDAS/PANS Advocacy and Support
www.pas.care