

Marisa Merlo, R.N

Baby William's Law Testimony 3/1/2016

Good afternoon. It is my honor and privilege to speak on behalf of the Parker family, and more importantly, Baby William today. My name is Marisa Merlo, and I am a registered nurse who has been working in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the UConn Health Center for the past 13 years. Perhaps even more relevant, I am a mother of 3 healthy, beautiful children.

On the night of December 23, 2015, I was requested into work early due to the incoming transport of critically ill twins. Throughout the night, I cared for Karigan, in addition to assisting in the care of her brother William. During the course of my shift, I was able to provide their devastatingly distraught father with information regarding the care of the twins. I encouraged dad to take video and pictures of the babies, to take back to mom because Debbie remained a patient at Windham Hospital.

On Christmas Eve, William's health deteriorated considerably. UConn NICU staff communicated the urgency of the situation to the parents, as Nick was looking to be granted approval from the insurance company for Debbie to be transferred. Due to the lack of 24 hour availability of the Parker's insurance company, Debbie was unable to be transferred in a timely manner. She never saw her son alive. He died on Christmas morning.

Throughout this agonizing process for the Parkers, I have shared many tears with Debbie. Debbie will live without ever feeling the beating of William's heart against her skin, the touch of his tiny finger wrapped around hers, even if just for a moment before his death. Insurance companies need to be mandated to maintain a 24 hour manned phone number, 365 days a year, to accommodate families like the Parkers. With the passage of this bill, we can only hope there will not be any other parents living the Parker's tragic story. We owe it to Baby William to pass the law that bears his name, with the hopes that every family of critically ill newborns, can have the opportunity to, at the very least, say goodbye. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marisa Merlo RN". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'M'.