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House Bil 259: Patient's Access to Integrative Healthcare

Chairman Pendergrass and Vice Chair Pena Melnyk and Members of the Committee:

*In the fall of 2012, my beautiful, outgoing 19-year-old daughter Stratton was dying in front of my eyes. Within 10 months, my 5'9" daughter, who when healthy weighted 134 lbs. and wore a size 2/4, had lost to 110 lbs. and was literally skeletal, in great pain, with barely enough energy to walk. Her normally vibrant eyes were dull and lifeless. I was desperate for help. Thank GOD we ultimately got in to see a brilliant integrative physician who literally saved my daughter's life. Sadly, she retired several years ago because of fear of losing her medical license, due to the problems we are trying to solve for many caring and courageous physicians in Maryland with this bill. She saved many more than just my daughter, and it is a crime to have lost her brilliant mind, and her willingness to treat outside of the norm because of no protection from the medical board when there are so many suffering from Lyme and their insidious co-infections among many other autoimmune illnesses, as well as mold toxicity, here in Maryland.*

*In addition to Stratton, now 27, my daughter Sutherland, now 29 also had Lyme, diagnosed for years as Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis from the time she was 16, and my husband, Jerry had a bull's eye on his arm from a tick bite on a golf course in Ocean City in 2014. All have thankfully been treated by a miracle worker integrative physician who has CURED them, and we need these providers in Maryland, with no fear from the medical board, who must not understand how miraculous and incredible his integrative treatments have been for so many. Additionally, this amazing man is seeking to teach other physicians, to help cure as many as he can, but others are afraid to learn and take the risk. This is devastating. Maryland NEEDS providers just like this and to open the doors for others to learn this protocol and others, without fear.*

*The summer of 2012, after mosquito bites in May, Stratton had constant headaches, a sore throat, generally felt poorly and no energy. The Internal Medicine physician suggested Mono, and for her to rest. In August, she departed Maryland for her sophomore year of college at Ole Miss.*

*On August 28, 2012, she went to the Urgent Care in Oxford, MS with sore throat, sore neck, sore, swollen spine/vertebrae in her upper back and neck, sore arms/legs, low grade fever, and couldn't sleep because of the pain. Ironically, this very first physician in Mississippi suspected Lyme Disease, and gave her the requisite prescription of Doxycycline for 10 days, and unfortunately gave her a shot of steroids, which put the Lyme spirochetes on 'steroids', one of the worst things you can do when a person is suffering from Lyme Disease.*

*Thus, began our journey. Stratton had to withdraw from college by September 6th, and then we went from Baptist Hospital in MS, to almost a week at Methodist Hospital in Houston, TX and then home to Maryland to the University of Maryland Health System and so many physicians.*

*We saw the following type of physicians: Family Practice, Internal Medicine, ENT, Infectious Disease, OBGYN, Rheumatologists (in MS, in TX, in Easton, at Un of MD Health), Hematologist/Oncologist, Gastroenterologist, Neurologist, and then Psychologist and Psychiatrist. Many frightening illnesses were ruled out via testing, but no one could tell me what was wrong.*

*We had the original suspected diagnosis of Lyme (sadly, improperly treated) then Lupus, the suspected bone cancer (and a horrifically painful bone marrow biopsy), and most everything in between. Ten months, and 27 different physicians later, they told me it must all be in her mind. Really, she's so special she can make herself have fever every day? I was disgusted. And I was truly frightened.*

*I had gotten a copy of every single lab test done, and I had stacks of reports, and I would sit on the internet for hours and hours and hours researching, and I would plug in the values that were not in the normal range, and everything kept leading me back to Lyme Disease. Tragically, the traditional tests, the Western Blot and the ELISA test, have extremely high false negatives of approximately 70%, and unfortunately for her, she didn't test positive. It was ultimately explained to me that the spirochetes burrow into your tissues, and organs, including the brain and the heart and are no longer in the blood stream if you are not tested within the first few months of infection.*

*From my research, I was convinced that she had Lyme and the co-infection Babesia and in December of 2012, I begged our local physician to treat her as if she had chronic Lyme Disease. He ordered a mid-line inserted into her upper arm, and she took IV Rocephin for 30 days starting December 7, 2012. Within the first week, she was markedly better, and we naively thought we had this beat, and so she re-enrolled for the spring semester college and headed back to school in early January 2013. When we pulled the line in early January, within days, the symptoms all came flooding back. She again had to withdraw from school, and she was getting worse.*

*One thing we discovered, was that whatever this was, it did respond to antibiotics, so no longer could the doctors try to say this was all in her head. Such a devastating, frustrating and insulting thing to say to someone so very sick and who had gone through so much.*

*In March of 2013, we finally got to see the first brilliant integrative physician who saved my daughter's life. She was amazing and innovative and caring and visionary. She knew exactly what Stratton had via a clinical exam. And we confirmed via IGENEX Lab in California, which specializes in testing for Lyme Disease. She taught me so much, so I could learn and share with others. She believed educating her patients and their caregivers would be the only way to fight the lack of education for physicians, and to help the public become aware so we could help ourselves.*

*This doctor knew she was retiring, due to fear from the medical board as she was successful in her Lyme treatment so her name was being talked about everywhere. As she was on her way out, we initiated a trial using a legal CBD paste (THC had been stripped out), with a strict diet of no GMO, no gluten, and all organic food, along with 'detoxing' daily with far infrared saunas, and Epsom salt baths, etc. We used Chinese herbs to help with the pain. She took massive doses of vitamins because the spirochetes zap them from your body. I was able to keep Stratton relatively comfortable and I could get antibiotics from our Internal Medicine physician from time to time when we needed it. But she was still sick.*

*I went to so many seminars to learn, and it was there, after our initial life-saver integrative physician had retired, and I was trying to treat Stratton myself with what I had learned, that I was blessed to learn of a physician who CURES Lyme. How did I learn of him? Other people told me of being cured by him!!! Others*

*that I had met and talked with when they or their children were so sick. It took a YEAR to get into see him!!! He CURED Stratton! He gave her her life back! This brilliant and selfless man uses unconventional treatments. Nothing that is in the traditional Infections Disease/Lyme treatment protocol actually CURES Lyme Disease, but he did with his well-studied protocol.*

*And he CURED my other daughter Sutherland, who suffered from 'traditional' Lyme, with joint pain and fatigue, vs Stratton's neurological Lyme. And then he cured my husband's traditional Lyme, who is the only one of the 3 who had a bull's eye from a tick bite. This physician is nothing short of a miracle worker, and people came from all over the country to see him. His protocols are very different than traditional treatments, they were very mild, and VERY effective! We saw results very, very early in the treatment program and they CURE Lyme! WHAT A MIRACLE!!!*

*I promised God if He would save my child I would educate and mentor others as much as I could. I have mentored so many people since then I have lost count, and it is frightening to know this is an epidemic and it has largely ignored. People are suffering so much, and people are dying. There is no discrimination with this illness, small children playing in the yard, to golfers, to equestrians, to hikers, to someone who enjoys gardening, are all at risk. This physician accepted many sufferers that I mentored and referred until the last few years when it just became too risky to treat Lyme patients in Maryland. He has other patients he has successfully treated for autism, ALS, Parkinson's, MS, etc. Why on earth would the state of Maryland potentially take away the license of a man saving so many lives? And why would we be denied the opportunity to select treatments we want to try? I'll never understand. But I'm praying this time will be different and that you will pass this bill.*

*The integrative treatments we received proved to be 100% effective, had no risk or negative side effects, were very gentle, and were far less expensive compared to conventional medical treatment.*

*Please approve this bill, and save lives across Maryland, and beyond.*

Thank you,

Shari Wilcoxon

Thank you so much to the visionary sponsors of this bill, Senator Adelaide C. Eckardt and Senator Katherine A. Klausmeier.