

February 5, 2020

Delegate Car,

I am writing in support of bill HB447, requiring insurance coverage for Pandas/Pans treatment. My family has fallen in the rabbit hole of getting treatment for this disease.

Our PANDAS story actually began one year ago today. To tell you I was scared would be an understatement. A year later, I am still terrified that I will never truly reach the healing point for my son. You see, as a single mother I had to find a means within his insurance to get my child some comfort, any level of comfort in battling this devastating disease. I cannot testify to the hardships of doing a go fund me, or taking out loans or selling my home as they are just not possible routes for me to take. My son does currently have a neurologist, a psychiatrist, a cardiologist, and his therapist, and youth group. Those on top of the IEP meetings at school to get necessary accommodations just so my son can make it through his day. All of these appointments geared toward helping him require me to lose time at work. And while all these treatments are providing bandaids for his symptoms, his true healing will not come until insurance is required to pay for treatments. Very recently I have run into his insurance not wanting to fill his antibiotics as prescribed by his neurologist. I have not begun to fight them as I am running out of fight. I have no time during my work day to fight. I am literally torn between providing for my son and fighting to help cure him.

The lack of knowledgeable doctors is the other battle we face. To have doctors look at you like you're crazy or worse believe you are is not helping my son recover. I know this is real! We are living with it every day while trying to maintain some level of normalcy that just no longer exists for us.

I wanted to write testimony for you to consider when the bill is presented as I know we are not the only family suffering. We are not the only family in a rabbit hole. We are NOT the only ones relying on this bill to be passed in order to truly heal our kids. For a mother to be unable to help her own child is unnecessary torture. This is how I feel...tortured. My son is tortured. He is consumed with fears, anxiety, hyperactivity, loss of focus, OCD, sensory processing issues and those are just the ones on the forefront of his every day battle.

Please consider approving this bill for the many of our Maryland families still in this fight.

Thank you,

Trista Hoffman

