

Nicole Lambert
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Madam Chairman and Members of this Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is Nicole Lambert. I am a resident of Baltimore City. I am also a Maryland mother. I am here to testify in favor of House Bill 53. As all mothers inside and outside this room know – our primary responsibility is to protect our children. Each day, I do everything within my power to make sure my daughter is safe and healthy.

Unfortunately, last year, my daughter became seriously ill. An invasive medical procedure was recklessly and improperly performed on my daughter by staff at her school. This procedure was performed without my knowledge or permission.

When my daughter started to feel sick, I had no idea what was wrong with her. Nothing is more terrifying as a mother than seeing your child suffer and not knowing how to help her. Eventually, a doctor determined that the contraceptive device Nexplanon was improperly implanted inside my daughters arm. As a matter of sheer luck, medical professionals were able to remove the implant before any further potential complications, such as blood clots, occurred.

When I learned what was going on, I started crying. My child was in danger and I had no idea what was going on.

I later learned that staff at my daughter's school improperly placed the implant in her arm. I was furious. I went to the school, only to have the school nurse refuse to speak with me. I told her that I had a right to know exactly what they did to my child. Instead, they told me to leave campus.

I do not understand why school officials call me for my permission to give my daughter Tylenol, but not performing an invasive medical procedure on my daughter – such as this implant. Ironically, my consent was required to remove the implant.

Something is clearly very wrong here. School officials may not know a child's full medical history. School officials may not have access to a child's full medical history. School officials may not perform a complete, proper medical work-up for a child. School officials may not have proper training. School officials may not perform any follow-up with a child.

School officials should not be performing invasive medical procedures on children without the knowledge and consent of their parents. Unlike my child's pediatrician, I do not get a chance to select or screen my child's healthcare providers at school.

In the case of Nexplanon, the implant was never tested on children under the age of 18 before it was introduced to the market. The implant was also contra-indicated by my daughter's weight.

Furthermore, because the implant remains in the child for up to 3 years. School officials may implant a child with Nexplanon only to have the child graduate and have no plan for its removal.

My daughter's school has not addressed any of these concerns.

I'm grateful to Delegate Parrott who, after hearing a news report on my family's story, decided to introduce House Bill 53. I believe this Bill is necessary to protect not only parental rights, but also the health and safety of our children.

I kindly request members of the Health and Government Operations Committee to give House Bill 53 a favorable report. Thank you.