

House Bill 677

Thank you for giving our family an opportunity to explain why House Bill 677 is so important.

My son Ian is autistic, he's a happy, loving and caring young man. He hasn't always felt happy and safe. Currently he is with an agency that he truly loves.

One day I was visiting my son at his old apartment. I noticed that his mattress was sunken in the middle. When I touched it, it felt like a sponge filled with urine. I started to take pictures of the mattress and the aide at the time told me I didn't have to do that. I pulled the mattress off of the bed and when I laid it on its side urine poured out of it. I was overwhelmed that my son was sleeping on a urine soaked mattress. I should add that my son had a bed wetting issue, but the staff was instructed to make sure my son went to the bathroom before he went to bed and they needed to wake him up around midnight and walk him to the bathroom. This was rarely done. The result is a urine soaked bed. I can tell you when he stayed with me before we found a new agency, after two weeks of waking him up to use the bathroom he started going on his own. This proves that that agency never followed the instruction. They just didn't care.

The second incident is just as devastating. I was visiting my son on a Friday and he had no bruises on his body. That following Monday he had bruises on his arm and chest. He also had a cauliflower ear. When we took him to the doctor, he said is your son a boxer or does he play a contact sport. We said no. When a boxer is punched on the side of the head the ear is swollen and becomes very enlarged. Not to mention it's painful. When we took him back to the doctor, they had to cut it open because it became infected. Once that was done they had to suture his ear again.

In conclusion, I must tell you that the physical pain is gone and he is healed, but the emotional scars are still there. I'm with my son every week and he always says to me, Dad are they going to hurt me again. I tell him, no you will never see them again. I know that the following week when we are together he will ask me the same question again. I will tell him I love you and I promise they will never touch you again. Please pass this bill to protect anyone in the future being abused like my son.

John Wetherington