

HB 2797

Chairman Williamson, Cochairs Sprenger, Cochair Gorsek, members of the committee, my name is John Densem. I thank you for this opportunity to speak.

My son, Douglas had just returned from what was said to be a successful graduation from his second month of rehab. It was early in June 2011 and the weather was nice. We were so happy to have him home and to see him clean, happy and functioning normally. We went sailing as a family, Doug bringing his pretty girlfriend that he hoped to wed one day. On the evening of the 9th we attended the high school graduation of our niece, Doug and sister Heather sitting behind us being a bit silly and enjoying applauding the graduates. On the way home we all sang along to oldie tunes on the radio. After our good nights everything seemed good. Doug was 23 and appeared in good spirit. His councilors at rehab had heaped praise on him and assured us he was ready to resume a normal life.

My wife was just up getting ready for work when I left for my job in downtown Portland. I didn't check up on my son as it was still before 6 AM. As the engineer on a high rise I had just taken down the buildings air conditioning when I received a frantic call from my wife. She had found Doug sitting in his desk chair unresponsive. I yelled at her to call 911 as I dropped everything and ran to the elevator down 10 stories to my car. I ran at least 2 lights in town before I reached the freeway and then traveling at speed that should have earned me a parade of patrol cars. I ditched the car somewhere near my driveway as there were emergency vehicles everywhere. As I entered the house, I saw my wife

slumped on the dining room floor, a blue stripe on the white wall where her new jeans had rubbed the wall on her way down.

Doug was a good kid, he was always well groomed, happy, considerate and somewhat of an empath. Not to say that he was not without an occasional problem, I came to know his middle school principal on a first name basis. Closest to his mom, he would actually counsel her when she was not happy about this or that. As parents we dropped other opportunities to spend time with our kids. We saw them through sports as coaches, team moms and committee members. Scouting as den leader and assistant scout master. We camped, fished, vacationed and sailed together. The kids were practically raised on our sailboats. Doug loved to sail with me and cajoled me to sail on the edge when we were racing. I would instruct him that technique was sometimes better than a tight trim.

Politicians recently have claimed that if gun control could save just one life then it would be worth it. Wouldn't then be hypocritical to not devise a stricter deterrent to illegal drug dealing when there is nearly 1 death per day in Oregon due to Opioid overdose? I think that this bill is a step in the right direction however I would be in favor of even stricter laws.

This is a man responsible for my sons death, one of the men. I wasn't allowed to face the others apparently because there wasn't a provable direct link between Rolin Guillermo and the men higher in the drug supply chain. In talking with the investigators I learned that this man had priors for distribution in California but was free due to lax or

sanctuary policies. Drug dealing in many places is not considered a violent crime!

My son now rests in this box hastily acquired in our grief for a quick memorial. The memorial had to be delayed as over 300 people tried to crowd into the chapel. The box rests atop his dresser, we yet unable to give him up, his clothes still folded neatly in his drawers. My wife, still suffering from depression claims that she can still smell him and his cologne in the hoodie hanging on the headboard of our bed. Occasionally I find her holding it to her face quietly sobbing. We are all victims.