

Chair Representative Rachel Prusak
Co-Chair Representative Andrea Salinas
Co-Chair Representative Cedric Hayden

I, Tonya Miller, am here to testify and to ask for your support of HB 2390.

Five years ago, our family was thrown into a deep, dark, hole that we never knew existed. Our sweet little girl, who had been thriving, became very ill. This little girl, who had just been singing in the shower, had become paralyzed with fear over the simple task of stepping into the shower. At 10 years old, she could no longer shower unassisted. I would have to stand half way in the shower with her and wash her hair as quick as I could. She was certain that there were tiny spiders coming out of the shower head. While I washed her hair, she cried hysterically and uncontrollably. Bed time had also become near impossible. My daughter's separation anxiety had come out of nowhere and she could not sleep unless I was right beside her. Bedtime involved hours of intense panic attacks. She couldn't breathe, she couldn't calm down, she couldn't sleep in her room, she couldn't sleep without me. Were we all going to die? Was there going to be a fire? Would we lose our home? What if there was an earthquake? What if we all ended up homeless? This was every single night. While she could ask questions, she could not answer them. She was terrified of lying. Any question she was asked, no matter how big or how small, she could not answer because she "might" lie and if she told a lie she would go to hell. Instead of answering the question she would sit unable to speak, frozen in a state of fear. Hundreds of times a day, yes, hundreds, she would say the word, "maybe." That was the word that kept her safe. She would say this word in a moment of complete silence, she would say this word during a conversation. This word was literally spoken non-stop. Her body had also started having tics. She would sniff non-stop, often to the point of nearly passing out. She would open her mouth really wide. Her eyes would squint and move around and sometimes if you didn't know better, it just looked like she was trying to focus her vision. Those tics would eventually lead to bigger moments. At her worst, her entire body would move uncontrollably. I remember seeing this for the first time. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. She simply could not function. These symptoms just got worse. Eventually she started having hallucinations and couldn't even open a door without going through a repetitive sequence of hand motions to be sure her hands were clean. But, the worst thing of all was when she would cry out to me that she wanted to die, that she couldn't live like this. We needed help. We needed to save our little girl before she was lost forever, if she wasn't already.

Our story is different from others in that we were immediately put in the right direction. We connected with a P.A.N.D.A.S. specialist from the beginning. I believe this was the first thing that saved our daughter. We began treatment as soon as we could. Early treatment is KEY!

Our daughter was so sick that it took nearly two years before she was well enough for a treatment called IVIG. We spent those first few years aggressively fighting the war that was ravaging her little body. She went on to need two rounds of IVIG. IVIG was the second thing that saved our daughter. At one point, when this all began, I looked at her

and thought that I had lost her forever. I thought it was too late. I remember thinking about how it felt to mourn the death of a living child. We felt so alone, and so hopeless. But we weren't. Our God was with us. He provided every step. He provided every need we had. When we didn't have the money to fight this battle, He provided for us, not through our insurance company, but through friends and family. You see, rather than having the financial support from our insurance company we had the opposite. Complete opposition. Not only were they not providing the treatments necessary, they were denying her need for these treatments. When did insurance companies become doctors? When did they take on the task of deciding who should get treatment and who shouldn't? These treatments SAVED my daughter. They gave her back her life. There are sick kids out there who need this. They need to access health care through their insurance providers. Without this help they will not recover. They will not have quality of life. That is wrong.

Our family has been through hell and back. We made it through the worst time in our lives. The worst nightmare that we could have imagined. And now, we are going to fight for every child that needs help in this ugly battle of P.A.N.D.A.S. and P.A.N.S. Please, help us. Help these kids. Early treatment is dire to a full recovery. These kids CAN get better. They can come back from the worst places of darkness and lead a full, healthy, and happy life IF they get this treatment. My daughter is proof that IVIG and early treatment will give these kids back their lives.

Thank you for your time and for listening to my story.

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