



Cassandra L. Sines

February 1, 2021

House Health and Human Services
Committee

To: Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee

Good afternoon. My name is Cassandra Sines and I live in Wichita, Kansas. My purpose today is to ask you to support HB2157 and pass restrictions on step therapy protocols.

I have a very personal reason for this request. I have two children, who both take medication to help them with their Autism. Some of these medications are psychotropic medications. My oldest son, Caleb, has aggressive behaviors and we have struggled since he was four years old to find the right combination of therapy and medication to help him. He currently lives at Heartspring in Wichita where he receives behavior therapy, one-on-one support, medication management, and his education.

One thing we have learned about Caleb over the years in trying to find the right medication combination was that he was very sensitive to the manufacturer of the medication and whether or not he had been receiving the brand name or the generic. If there was one slight change, progress that had been made could be gone quickly until we were able to readjust and get the correct “accurate” combination back together again.

When Caleb was 15-years-old, in approximately May or June, we had a med management appointment with his psychiatrist. At the time he had been on the medication Abilify (brand name) for a number of years. His doctor had explained to me, knowing about Caleb’s sensitivity to medications, that Abilify had just been released in a generic form. She advised me that our insurance may, because of step



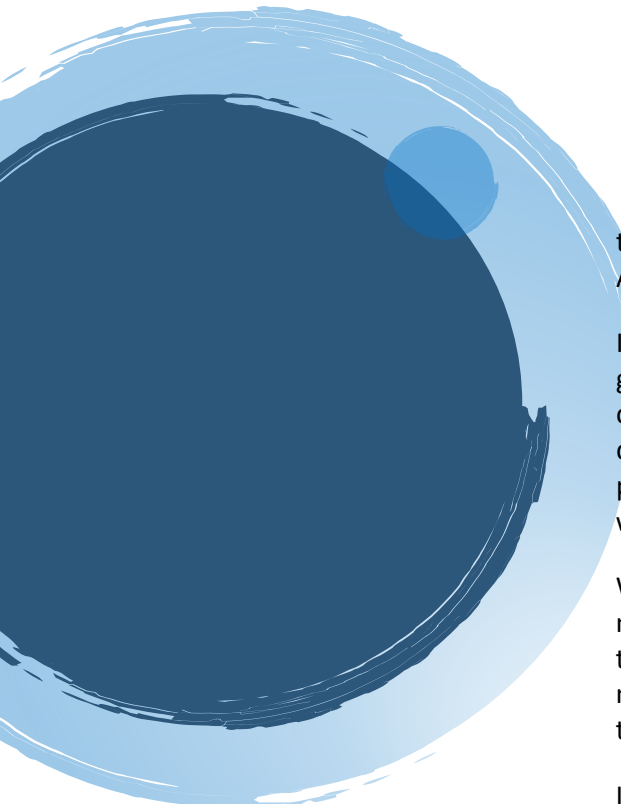
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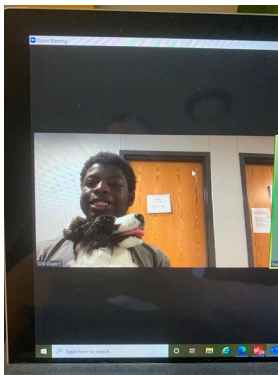


therapy, require us to “try” the generic and see how Caleb reacts to it. And, of course, that is exactly what happened.

It took less than two weeks for Caleb to become unstable on the generic form of Abilify and all of the gains that we had made with him came crashing down. Our family was in complete chaos. I called his doctor’s office and reported what was going on, was able to get a new prescription for brand-name Abilify, and while it took about three weeks for Caleb to stabilize, all was right with the world again.

We need you to pass restrictions on step therapy so individuals with mental illness do not have to suffer “trialing” medications, especially if they and their doctor know what will work. Insurance companies are not the medical providers. We need to let the medical provider make the decisions for their patients.

I would like to share a picture of my son now, at 18-years-old, so that you can have a face of a person that you are making this decision for. He, and everyone else with mental illness, needs you to pass this legislation.



Thank you for your consideration.

Cassandra Sines
Wichita, Kansas

