

To the Oregon Legislature,

My husband, Dr. John Bischel, suffered from a very rare disease called Multiple System Atrophy. MSA is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects all the autonomic functions of the body.



John was a well liked and respected child psychiatrist and had been a vital part of the community until Multiple System Atrophy took away his ability to function as a normal human being. He had always worked in the public sector; first with Multnomah County Mental Health, then with Clackamas County Mental Health systems.

He always felt working in the public sector was where he could do the most good for his entire community, much like all of you have chosen politics as your way to serve your communities.

We had made so many plans, but having to retire at the age of 64 was not one of those. Dr. Bischel loved his work. He was good at it. He helped everyone that crossed his path.

But as his disease progressed, he realized he could no longer continue his passion of working with children as he had dedicated his life to do. Unfortunately, he was no match for Multiple System Atrophy.

My husband was plagued with problems of balance, he felt 'light-headed' frequently and would pass out without warning as the autonomic functions of his body ceased to operate properly. He also suffered from double vision, slurred speech, swallowing problems, difficulty breathing, bladder and bowel problems. In fact, every function his, as well as your body does on it's own automatically, was affected.

My husband and I didn't get to live out our plans. He didn't get to finish his work with children. He didn't get to enjoy his twilight years and revel in the work he had done during his lifetime. Instead, he had to spend his final days fighting the effects of MSA, knowing it was taking his life, and that no one was able to do a single thing about it.

You see, there is no cure for MSA. There are currently no treatments to delay the progress of the neurodegeneration in the brain. The only thing we can do is medicate patients of MSA, make them as comfortable as possible with the symptoms and help them through their journey in this life with as much love and dignity as we can.

It is my goal to educate others on this devastating disease and bring awareness so that we can find a cause and a cure. The lack of awareness about Multiple System Atrophy has hindered research funding.

If this was like the swine flu and thousands could die from it, research would be more funded.

Unlike the flu, it's not a matter of some could die from it; no one survives MSA.

I believe they deserve better than that.

I have provided you an information sheet from the National Institute of Health that describes Multiple System Atrophy.

I would appreciate your support of this Bill.

Thank You,

Charmayne Bischel

12042 SE Sunnyside Rd, #597

Clackamas, OR 97015

charmayne@bischel.com

(503) 701-6776



<http://www.multiplesystematrophy.org/>