

March 25, 2019

To: The House Business and Labor Committee and the Senate Workforce Committee  
From: Karen Reynolds  
Re: Support of HB 3031

Dear Chairs and Members of the Committee,

Good evening my name is Karen Reynolds and I'm a Respiratory Therapist.

In 2007 my 7-year-old son was in the hospital for his first brain tumor surgery. I prepared for this evening by reading over diary entries. This will describe the need for House Bill 3031, paid family and medical leave.

Day 3 in ICU. The day started early with Cooper writhing in pain, promises of pain meds, cold wash clothes, and singing his favorite song, Edelweiss.

Cooper's neurosurgeon came in and is concerned they didn't take enough of the mass. They may need to go in again.

I called Jeff feeling overwhelmed. Sawyer was crying for me to come home. What an immense hit on my babies. Jeff tells me the insurance company says our portion will be \$10,000...we are already sinking into this medical debt hole. The pressure sometimes is unbearable...no wonder so many couples split up. I wonder if we are going to make it.

As Cooper rested I got a call from my boss. As I held his hand I was told that they were posting my job. My boss said they had calculated that I was 4 hours short on the family medical leave act. I knew I was approved for leave. I knew we didn't have the finances or strength to fight this. I thought of my 8-years working for that hospital I thought of the holidays I spent away from my family to be with patients. She said if I wanted to keep my job I would have to come back tomorrow. Tomorrow my kid might be back in surgery! I told her to post the job and hung up. The worst part was Cooper woke up during this conversation. He said to me, "Mom everything is going to be alright." I truly hope so.

Our medical debt took us over 7 years to pay off. Once home my son experienced seizures and 5 more surgeries. During this time I looked for a new job. The stress of trying to save Cooper, care from my other son's, and pay basic bills was debilitating.

I will end by saying, the most important work I have done is caring for my family. I cannot think of any family who wouldn't benefit from House Bill 3031.