

SPEAKER

February 11, 2020

Re: HB 2601

Dear Education Committee,

My name is Judy Pilewski. My husband and I have ten grandchildren and I would like to share our family's vaccine injury story.

Our daughter Sonja and her husband John have 6 biological children, aged 19 to 6. The older three were completely vaccinated on schedule and have a host of autoimmune issues compared to the younger three who weren't but I want to focus on their third child, Alaina, today.

Alaina is now 14 years old. At Sonja's 20 week ultrasound a slight brain malformation was detected but Alaina was born completely healthy with no evidence of deficits. After evaluating her at birth and again six months later, doctors said it appeared that it would not be an issue after all. She nursed great and was a normal baby - - that is until her 2 month vaccines were administered. In the hours after her injections she began emitting a high pitched shriek which continued non-stop throughout the day and evening. She finally fell asleep and mercifully slept for 12 straight hours. As a sleep-deprived new mother, Sonja didn't think about how odd that was, she was just thankful they both could rest after such a traumatic day and assumed Alaina was exhausted. When she woke up, she was a different baby. She didn't want to nurse and, in fact she didn't want to be held and recoiled when touched. Despite that, she developed quite normally, meeting all milestones, over the next few years until right after her pre-kindergarten vaccines. That was the beginning of her epilepsy journey. At age 5 Alaina had her very first seizure during the night. We didn't know it at the time but it would be the first of thousands. Her next seizure left her entire left hemisphere badly damaged and resulted in right side paralysis. She was unable to speak or walk. After a month of in-patient rehab and several more months of out-patient therapy she learned to walk and talk again but she now had cerebral palsy along with epilepsy. For years Alaina battled epilepsy while doctors tried different medications but none were effective long term. She suffered dozens of seizures each day and it got to the point she was unable to leave the home or even her room. Their last option was to go forward with a radical and dangerous brain surgery, a hemispherotomy, in 2016 in which her entire left hemisphere was disconnected. She again spent weeks in in-patient rehab learning to walk again for the third time in her life. The surgery caused her to lose half of her vision and she's now legally blind. She also has no use of her right hand and no feeling on the right side of her body. She would tell you the surgery was worth it. Seizures are one of the most devastating, frightening and deadly afflictions anyone can endure. They also happen to be listed at the top of almost every vaccine package insert under possible side effects. Yes, Alaina was born with a slight brain abnormality and nature might have loaded the gun but we are convinced that vaccines pulled the trigger.

Judy Pilewski  
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