

Hello, Chairperson Filler,

Please, kindly consider those with, mental illnesses, and Autistic, peoples. Please do not lump, these people into the bill. It is disgraceful, to forget them. This is the time on behalf of the voiceless to, allow empathy to seep in. To bring to light the darkness of our prisons, who are now Mental health wards. Prisons, are the largest mental health treatment facility in America. Please, allow empathy to fill your hearts, for this group.

Today, I represent, NSSC, National Shattering the Silence Cohalition(on the ISMICC board for SAMHSA), and Parents & Advocates For Families of Seriously Mentally Ill, Facebook group. This is a group, that I am the administrator. Moreover, I am my sons mental health advocate. As a mental health advocate I have a few thoughts.

#1. This bill includes, our autistic, and ED people. Unfortunately, 30% of those kids will have psychosis by the time they are adults. Especially, higher functioning, ASD people.

Psychosis, is a brain disease, prodromal to Alzheimers.

#2. We are mortified by the lack of care available to our loved ones, before incarceration. We need Supervised and Independent Supervised housing. This could be cost effective for taxpayers. Inpatient care is, practically non existent. A revolving door. There are 2 prisons, in Michigan. They currently, house mentally ill and autistic people. These same people previously, qualified, to compete in special Olympics. A great charity, who many of you champion.

#3. These are people that could not access care on the outside. The Treatment Advocacy Centers, report card for Michigan, is unsettling. Michigan falls, to the bottom, 10 of all states.

#4. Services escaped us, for our need. We adopted our son, as a level 3 medically fragile baby. We had a contract, from SOM and a subsidized insurance. "In case, we needed it." said SOM. My husband's insurance as the primary insurance, saved Michigan State hundreds of thousands of dollars. When our insurance denied ABA autistic care, the state through, CMH, took years to approve. By that time we needed residential treatment, and that was denied.

This was before our autistic, mentally ill, son had a criminal record. We were free falling, as my husband and I became 24 hour a day, nurses to our son. He was suffering from, auditory hallucinations.

#4. If upper class parents, could not access help with 3 insurances, who can? We hired a lawyer for 3 years, whom helped us with the school, an IEP, 504. The lawyer, Defended criminal trespassing charges, as well. Tyler was also charged, with a CS3, for having a younger girlfriend. It was consensual. We had 3 lawyers, at one point. We are full guardians. Guardianship took 9 months(August-April). This trench, created, our free fall. As he was now 18. This time wait changed, his life forever. The lack of funding, for Kevin's law. The inability for, CMH to file an immediate Friday, court order. This is after the release of our son, from a mental health facility. He was arrested, Saturday, Feb 18, 2016, of trespassing. Tyler, will not be on the sex offender list. Yet, he is required, to do a mandatory sex offender group twice. He waited a year to get into the group. This is a year long group. Now he waits, again. This is standard for, Mentally Ill and Autistic peoples. He was 16 and Delusional. Tyler, is 21. He has spent, over 4 years, in prison and jail. He will be there for an additional 2 years. Tyler has spent, 20% of his childhood, incarcerated. We fear he is becoming institutionalized. He will be incarcerated, longer, then someone convicted of manslaughter. He received a Traumatic Brain Injury, in general population in the Muskegon County Jail. Incarceration, as a treatment, is not ideal.

#5 The "Romeo and Juliet" Sex Offender law, qualifies for Expungement after 10 years. After, Tyler's parole time, he will surpass 10 years.

#5. It is unfair to lump people with disabilities into the same category. These people, needed services, prior to prison. For this group of offenders, they, needed a safety net, besides prison.

Especially, since their true emotional intelligence, is much younger then their actual age.

#6.

"I have come to present to you the strong claims of suffering humanity," she wrote. "I come as the advocate of the helpless, forgotten, insane men and women held in cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens! Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience!"

By Dorothea Dix, 1843

We can do better, as a civilized society!

#7. This is the most important work, you do as a legislature. Thousands of our, parents, have been abandoned. You are obliged, to help those with brain diseases, the insane. Those you hold in your jails and prisons, at this moment.

Cheers,

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