

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2044
House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice
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Submitted by Stacy Krokroskia

My prayer since this nightmare began on July 25th has remained consistent, and that is that our story will save someone else's life. To keep another family from experiencing what we have went through. Our 22-year-old son Jordan died from an overdose on July 25th, 2012. I feel compelled to tell you a little about Jordan. He was the oldest of 4 children, 3 boys, and 1 girl. He was refreshing to be around. Jordan and I had a special bond. He was one of my best friends. Jordan was an athlete, a competitor. In high school he was a 3 sport athlete. As a freshman he started in Football and Baseball. He was good on the field and off the field. His dad and I have received many letters and compliments about how respectful he was and how he always went out of his way to help people. During his sophomore year Jordan had his wisdom teeth cut out. He went through several battles with dry sockets. It is during that time that he was first introduced to Hydrocodone. We didn't know this at the time, but during his high school career, Jordan would take pills off and on with his friends. Not consistently, but occasionally. We didn't ever see a change in him. He then went onto college to play baseball. It was during his first semester that he tore his labrum in his shoulder. He continued to practice with it torn. He got through with pain pills. He was getting them from a friend. He was taking a lot. After the first semester he came home for Christmas. His girlfriend told us how bad his shoulder was, and we immediately got him in to see a doctor. It was then that I think he realized he had a problem. He quit taking pain killers and was almost hospitalized due to the withdrawals. We of course, thought he had the flu and I believe he did too. Jordan came home from college that summer and seemed ok. Of course, during this time we still didn't know he had a problem. We learned the truth a few months later. He told us he had been struggling with pills. We got him counseling. Quite honestly, I didn't know anything about prescription drug addiction. I thought it wasn't a big deal. I couldn't tell he acted any different. I never saw his high. It was still the Jordan I always knew. Jordan's friends didn't even know that he took pills. It was his secret.

Fast forward to February 2012. Jordan decides that he has messed with pills long enough. He looks for treatment. The problem is Jordan doesn't fit the normal mold of an addict. The treatment centers wouldn't take him in-house. He wasn't bad enough. In Jordan's search for help, he even visited The Lafayette House, which is a shelter for battered women. He had looked in the phone book and found it under "drug facilities." This makes me laugh, because that is sooo Jordan. He was very naïve. He eventually found the Celebrate Recovery program. That worked for him. Jordan got a new phone number and deleted the numbers of the people that sold him pills. He was moving up at his job. He spent his free time with his family. Watching his brothers play baseball and spending time with his little sister. Things are going great. The week before he passed away he played in an alumni baseball game with his brothers and his dad. It was neat to see them all play together. He did injure himself that game. But Jordan wasn't one to complain. The Sunday before, we spent the day at his grandma's house swimming with his little sister. It was a good day. He told me that God had blessed him and helped him with his

addiction. He was happy. He told me he couldn't wait to be a dad. He was ready for that. He also told me he wanted to have his shoulder fixed again before he had kids so he could play catch with them. Jordan said he wanted to wait until there was a way to do it without pain meds. This was the happiest I had ever seen my son. He was making grown up decisions. Jordan comes home from work the week before he died with a grin on his face and says, "Mom, I got drug tested at work today....." I of course got a pit in my stomach, and say, "and....." He laughs and says don't worry mom it was good. I am good, better than I have ever been. He had been clean for almost 4 months by now. He was making amends with people he had taken pills from. He had taken pills from people and those people didn't even know they were gone. And he was still trying to make it right. That Monday his younger brother had to play for state baseball out of town. Jordan went to work early in the morning before any of us were up. We were not home that Monday night before he went to bed. The Tuesday was pretty much the same, we passed each other with our schedule, except that Tuesday we were traveling back to another ballgame, and planned on staying the night. Jordan stayed home because he had to work. On Tuesday night, Jordan always played pool and ate dinner with his friends at a local restaurant. That night he told his friends about Celebrate Recovery and his addiction. They had no clue. I don't know what happened after he left the restaurant, due to the investigation. But for some reason he was in touch with an old contact that had sold him pills before. I believe Jordan asked him for Hydrocodone and the guy didn't have it and suggested a fentanyl patch... A 100mic fentanyl patch. Jordan didn't know what that was. I believe he even stated that in his texts back to this guy. They met and Jordan got the patch. He put it on and went to bed. On Wednesday, at about 3:10, I haven't heard from Jordan. I have called and text. He usually responds. I asked my brother to run by my house and check on him. He is supposed to be at work but his car is at home. My brother goes by the house, checks on him and calls me back to tell me he is sleeping. I ask my brother to go back in the house and wake him up to call his mother. He gets mad at me and tells me Jordan has to be responsible for his actions. I ask him to do it anyway. When he returns to the house, he hears Jordan's 6 a.m. alarm going off. It had snoozed off the first time he was there. He turns on the light and his first thought is Jordan had been in a fight. His face was bloated and blue. When my brother touches Jordan's legs to shake him and his whole body moves, he realizes that he is dead. He has been dead for several hours. He immediately calls me back to tell me the news. I was at the Oak Park Mall, by myself. My husband dropped me off and went to Cabela's. After that phone call, life as we knew it changed. My heart broke. There is so much more I can sit here and tell you about Jordan. He was loved by many. There were around 1,000 people at his funeral. I didn't know most of them. But they knew Jordan. I can go on and on about stories that I have been told about Jordan since he died about the good things he did. Let's imagine for a moment that my son was a lowlife meth-addicted homeless man living on the streets.....

This is NOT about MY SON.....This is about CHANGE....I would feel the same about House Bill No. 2044. It is about accountability. Do I think my son played no part in his own death? No...I know he screwed up that night. I do believe he was ignorant and didn't know what he was taking. But I also believe he is being held accountable for it. All of us are. He's dead.

My hope is that with the passing of this bill, a person or a drug dealer will think twice about giving or selling drugs to another person. Maybe if they realize they can be charged with first degree murder and it will stick, they will think twice before giving the drug or selling it. I know that if a person really wants drugs and they are desperate enough, they can find them.

I am sure part of the argument will be... but the addict is asking for it. The drug dealer is only giving them what they are asking for. I am no attorney. But consider this for a minute. If I begged and pleaded, if I paid you, if I offered you whatever you wanted, to shoot me because I wanted to see what it felt like to get shot, and I died as a result of the bullet wound. The shooter had no intent on killing me. They didn't mean to hit an artery. They didn't mean for me to bleed to death. I just wanted to see what it felt like. Who would be charged with murder? I mean really, I asked for it. I begged for it. Would the shooter be charged with murder? I know this is a drastic analogy. But how is it any different?

I spoke to about 1000 people at Jordan's funeral. It is by the grace of God that I was able to speak. But I could hear Jordan speaking to me. It was like he was right there whispering in my ear, "Mom, there is more to come. Bigger things to come. Be patient and wait on your pitch Mom." I don't know if this opportunity is the Bigger things to come? But I didn't seek this out. I don't believe in coincidences. And my prayer is that Jordan's death can save someone else this heartache. Passing this bill will most likely not keep all the drug dealers off the streets. But if it keeps one from selling, to me it is worth it. If it keeps one from dyingIt is even more worth it.