

The Honorable John Barker
Committee of Federal and State Affairs
Statehouse Room 346-S
Topeka, KS 66612

Subject: HB2308 - Suicide evaluation upon admission to certain treatment facilities.

Thank you, Chairman Barker and members of the committee for allowing me to speak in support of HB2308. My name is Abbey Peterson.

The average tragedy for a three-year-old involves something like the fact that she wants her milk in the yellow cup because the green cup is *simply just unacceptable*. For me, I wish it could have been so simple, but **it wasn't**. For me, one day I had a dad and the next day, *I didn't*. And, nobody, nowhere could fix it.

There is only so much you can tell a three-year-old, so that they'll understand, which is why my mom waited until I was twelve to tell me that my father had died by suicide. For nine years, I believed everyone around me when they told me that my dad 'took the wrong kind of medicine.' I guess in a way they were right.

My dad was an alcoholic and also a drug user. Having anxiety, he turned to alcohol, marijuana, and Xanax as an escape. On a typical day, my dad would take up to ten Xanax. When my mom threatened to leave him, he immediately quit drinking and doing drugs. But, unfortunately, my dad's body was at the point of *reliance*, so when he just quit everything all at once, he began to get **sick and hallucinate**.

A couple days later, he packed his things and checked himself into a rehabilitation facility. My mom got a call the next morning that he was found hanging in the closet of the facility.

In the last sixteen years, I didn't get to grow up with a dad who taught me how to ride a bike, a dad who got to watch me play sports, graduate high school as class president, finish my first year of college as an honor roll student. I won't get to experience my dad walking me down the aisle at my wedding, or even introducing my kids to their grandpa. As a young adult, who lost her best friend she called dad; who has had to face many hard choices in only nineteen years; **this** is why I am pushing for my family's bill to be passed.

Abbey Peterson