

September 13, 2012
April 26, 2012
April 20, 2010

Testimony for Senate Bills, 5089 & 5090

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Health Policy Committee. It is, indeed, an honor to address you this morning and convey my thoughts on this important legislation.

At the top of this letter, besides the current date are two other dates. It is not a mistake. It is an irony that the two April date are almost two years to the day, I addressed the House committee on this very same subject.

So, here I am today, again giving my testimony of why these bills are a necessity to become law and help our society in many ways.

As with some legislation, bills are made into law based on events that happened from everyday life. These bills are no exceptions. When my wife, Paula, died from ovarian cancer in 2006, we had many used and unused prescriptions drugs leftover. What do you do with them and all the medical supplies that are unused? Well, the normal thing to do, and what you are told to do, is flush them down the toilet so no one else would mistakenly take them.

I have included two pictures that reflect a couple of day's collections of such drugs. These can be used to help dying people be relieved of the pain when they can no longer afford to buy them. At the end of 2011 the Undersheriff and I held a drug take back at the Sherriff's department in Clare County. Someone dropped off 40 vials of an MS medicine. On the internet, this medicine cost \$800 EACH. That is a \$32,000 supply of medicine that could have been used very productively for our people. Instead it was destroyed. That was one day in the small town of Harrison. How many small towns in Michigan? How many bigger towns with more medicines? With the rising costs of all medicines, this practice of disregarding drugs so easily is truly unfortunate but fixable.

It was only within the past 5 years, that there is hard evidence that drugs flushed down the drain are now seeping into our drinking water. Both in natural ground water and city municipal water systems.

What I have told you is what today is all about. Making my passion, your passion. This is a Win-win-win situation for everyone. What these bills will do is:

- Keep drugs out of our drinking water.
- Get unused drugs out of people houses so kids can't have access to them.
- Get unused drugs out of homes to protect the elderly in taking the wrong medicines
- Get unused drugs out of houses so predators won't break in and steal them.
- Get unused prescription drugs to people who cannot afford them.

- Protects manufacturer and giving citizens. (Good Samaritan Law)
- Inspection of all drugs before disbursement. (Registered Pharmacist)

As the bill stands today is not the way I envisioned it. It was to let all people participate in the program. Not just 'professional' institutions. That was left out of this bill. When this bill becomes law and is successful, I will be back to support the fact that many, many people have prescription drugs that can be reused using stringent safety procedures.

I know the pharmaceuticals have reasons not to let private individuals turn in their drugs. I don't know what they are afraid of. Declining sales? Hardly. People that will use these available drugs will not have insurance to buy them in the first place. People not storing them properly? Have you ever wondered what transportation is involved after a drug is made in a factory? Waiting for shipment, shipped a crossed country for, perhaps, days in an unrefrigerated truck, sitting in a warehouse awaiting delivery to the drug store and then sitting on the shelf till used. I can see several issues with that process as well.

But when 35 other states have laws on their books addressing this issue, it is past time that Michigan should have one. I brought a binder with me today that contains all those laws. Do we want to be the last State?

I understand that Community Health will have to write the rules for this program to work. I am offering myself and several other people to assist them in making this happen. I truly believe you need to have representation from the very people that need to rid themselves of these drugs.

I, we, are willing to make this happen. It continues with this committee. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

God Bless You!
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Attachments:
2 Pictures

