

**Remarks for First Lady Sue Snyder
House Health Policy Committee Regarding Safe Sleep
September 17, 2013**

Good morning Chairwoman Haines and members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to be here before you today to discuss this very important topic.

I also want to take a moment to thank Director Corrigan and the teams of both the Michigan Departments of Human Services and Community Health for their joint work and leadership ... and especially thank Ms. Lee for being here to share her story. I can't imagine how difficult this must be, but I am grateful for Shareece's courage and efforts to help ensure that no other parent will ever have to experience what she has.

I can still remember being a new mother so clearly ... There is nothing that you wouldn't do for your baby. But for too many families in Michigan, that instinct to nurture ... to protect ... and to comfort ... turns to tragedy when the baby co-sleeps with another person or in their crib with blankets – the dangers of which are still far too unknown. Making sure parents have the latest information about the importance of safe sleep is vital, and that is why I support this legislation and the efforts of the Department of Community Health and the Department of Human Services.

The death of an infant is perhaps even more devastating when it was preventable. The untimely loss of a child is deeply felt throughout a family and, very often, the community. I hope we can spare every family in Michigan the pain that comes from this.

We must all continue to remind our sisters, our brothers, our neighbors and our friends that while we may want to hold our babies close at night, the only safe place for infants is asleep on their backs in a crib of their own that is free of toys, pillows and bumpers.

The pain that Shareece expresses – a grief that is unfortunately shared by far too many parents who have lost a child to their sleep environments – is felt by us all.

I am here to lend my voice and my heart to stopping these entirely preventable losses of life. The legislation before you today will help make a difference in safe sleep education efforts. I hope you find it deserves your vote. Together, we can be on a mission to inform parents and caregivers about safe sleep, because no family should ever have to mourn a child because of the lack of information or understanding of the tragic consequences of unsafe sleep.

Chairwoman Haines and committee members, thank you again for allowing me to be here today.

Mrs. Snyder turns microphone over to Shareece. Shareece ...