

1/29/2022

I am a proponent of Senate bill 276.

Chairman Hilderbrand and Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee Members:

My journey as a single mother was not an easy one. I was in my early twenties and unaware that I was visually impaired. My parents did not wish for me to have a disability label hinder me in my life's journey. When I became pregnant and separated from the biological father, my family thought it best to take primary custody of my child to ease the burden of having to do it on my own. It wasn't until I was diagnosed and became unemployed leaving me with ample time to be a full time mother that I was informed that they felt it best and safer for my child to remain in their custody based on me being visually impaired. It was rough for the first 15 years of trying to be okay with not having her full time and thinking that my parents knew what was best. It wasn't until my child turned 15 and was legally able to drive that she came to my home on spring break and never left. When my parents requested she return to their house, she explained that she wanted to help me out since I could not drive and she was able to take care of herself, which meant she was able to take care of me. Of course, within a week of us actually being able to live together, she and I realized that we could have been in each other's lives this whole time and are still recovering from the emotional damage it caused. She is thriving in college and we try to make weekly calls to each other to stay connected, but due to the lack of time we were allotted in her formative years, there is a distance between us that is hard to close. There is an absence there that was caused by us not being around each other full time. A void was felt over all those years that we both felt for different reasons and had learned how to suppress the pain of not having each other in our lives to the point that we do not know how to get that bond the way it needs to be.

Sincerely,

Roshunda H.

Wichita Sedgwick Kansas

KS SENATE DISTRICT 29

Senator Oletha Faust Goudeau