

PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 442

Given by: Dave Hemmert
Commerce and Labor Committee
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Rm 121

Chairman Yuko and Members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, my name is Dave Hemmert. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 442.

I live in Auglaize County on a family farm. I attended college in Dayton, earned an engineering degree, came home to the farm, and took a job designing and selling metal working machinery. I married a local girl and had two children. I have attempted to live a conventional life. But conventional is not such a good thing nowadays when it comes to health care matters.

Several years ago, I had a lot of health problems that included swollen tonsils, head colds, nose colds, throat colds, diarrhea, headaches, fuzzy sight, insomnia, periodontal disease and sprained ankles. My joints cracked and my hair was falling out. I had no stamina. I couldn't run. I could barely walk without exhaustion. I sometimes blacked out. I couldn't find a comfortable position in a chair or even in a bed. I was exhausted but couldn't sleep. I awoke in the morning as exhausted as I was when I went to bed. Then a very serious issue occurred, a tumor was found that I needed to have removed. I was 32 years old.

My family doctor sent me to a specialist. I went right from there into surgery and a malignant cancerous mass the size of an orange was removed. A few days later, I began cobalt radiation treatments. I went from 200 pounds down to nearly 100 pounds and looked like death.

This happened nearly 30 years ago and was a big deal in our small community where everyone knows everything about everybody. Cancer was not so common then. My mother and father had suggested that we keep my situation quiet. Not to let people know. It was like having leprosy. I called a lady in town that had knowledge about food and herbs and announced to her that I had cancer. I wanted to live. That phone call led me from person to person, from book to book, from junk food to healthy food, and to the plants we call herbs.

I was no longer content just to live. I wanted to have the energy and health I had as a child. I wanted to rid myself of all my ailments. I experimented on my own body. Each new thing I learned, I did to myself. I put my body through hell to prove or disprove what I learned.

When I was discharged from the hospital, the medical world was done with me. They may have saved my life but when I got home from the hospital, I still had all my health problems. I still had no energy. I still had a degenerated body that would possibly grow new cancerous tumors. All the conditions that caused that cancerous mass to grow in me were still present.

That's when alternative health care people saved my life a second time. They showed me how to live and pointed me toward things that would help my body correct itself; and it did. One by one, every ailment disappeared. Now at age 62, I help unload bales of hay all day without exhaustion. I feel so good, I'm not even aware of my body.

Years ago, I read a book titled, "Thank God I Had Cancer". If I hadn't had cancer, I wouldn't have found alternative health care. If I hadn't found alternative health care, I wouldn't have changed my life. If I hadn't changed my life, I'd be dead by now. One of the degenerative diseases would have gotten me long ago.

In my community many have died of cancer. People in my community know I went off and did something to come back from the dead. When they come down with this dreaded disease, their pleading eyes beg me to help them; to tell them what I did to regain my health. Time after time, I've looked away in silence. That's why I'm here; to make up for that silence and to see that people in our state are permitted to get the help I received and also that those trying to help people who want and need their help, aren't threatened with bureaucratic hassle and criminal prosecution.

Recently there was a big fanfare by one of the fast food restaurant chains. They're discontinuing the use of hydrogenated oils. It's been discovered they're harmful to your health. I learned that from an alternative health care person 30 years ago. How many people would have made a change in his or her lifestyle had they known that?

I respect the medical professions; they're like the body shop for our cars. When we wreck the car or the car has rust, we take it to the body shop and they fix it. But driver's education is important too; so we don't wreck the car so often and so it doesn't rust out too soon. That's where alternative health care comes in. We need both.

There are hundreds of thousands of deaths a year from mistakes in the medical world. We can't fault the medical professions for this. It's a difficult business they're in. Several of my close family members are in the medical profession. The good they do far outweighs the bad.

How many of you know a person who's died as a result of alternative health care? I don't know one. Even if some food or herb doesn't help a person, people should have the freedom to learn about it and use it if they choose. Consumer freedom is consumer freedom. Both medical help and alternative help must be permitted. 30 years ago I prayed that I be given a few years to see my babies grow up. Now I'm watching my babies' babies grow up. I want everyone to have that opportunity. Consumers and alternative health care people need legislation to protect their freedom of choice.

Please pass House Bill 442 and thank you for listening to my story. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.