



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 404		DATE: 2/17/2021	
COMMITTEE: Health and Mental Health Policy			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ArnieDienoff@Yahoo.Com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/17/2021 11:40 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			
I am in Support of this Bill.			



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: E. BRIANA CONLEY		PHONE NUMBER: 3142894304	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: PARAQUAD		TITLE: PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY MANAGER	
ADDRESS: 5240 OAKLAND AVE.			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63110
EMAIL: bconley@paraquad.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/11/2021 11:25 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Testimony before the House Health and Mental Health Policy Committee February 15, 2021 Submitted by E. Briana Conley Paraquad, Inc. 5240 Oakland Ave, Saint Louis, MO 63110 (314) 289-4200 bconley@paraquad.org TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 404 Paraquad would like to thank the Chair and members of the House Health and Mental Health Policy Committee for allowing us to submit testimony, as well as Representative Aldridge, for sponsoring this legislation. Disability awareness is essential to equity and inclusion of people with disabilities. Paraquad supports designating the month of April 'Limb Loss Awareness Month' in Missouri, as it is nationally. Respectfully Submitted, E. Briana Conley Public Policy & Advocacy Manager Paraquad



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JACOB		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: vossjz@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/14/2021 10:50 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

My name is Jacob Voss. I'm a lifelong Missouri resident and live in St. Louis. My father, Allen Voss is also a lifelong Missourian and was a St. Louis Union Carpenter for over thirty years. In 2017, my dad's right ankle began to swell. Thinking he must have rolled his ankle at work, he didn't give it much thought. But weeks passed and the ankle remained swollen. Several scans and a biopsy later, Al was diagnosed with soft tissue sarcoma in his right leg. While the cancer was still local to his leg, and had not spread to other areas of his body, his doctors ultimately decided that the best course of treatment was chemotherapy and the amputation of his right leg, below the knee. Al's life changed overnight. For all of my life, my dad's trade, carpentry, was his one true passion and one of the most significant parts of his personality. Some artists use paint. Some use stone or clay. My dad's canvas was wood. There are entire neighborhoods in Franklin and St. Louis Counties full of his creations - renovated basements, new decks, custom bookshelves. But unfortunately such a job requires you to be on your feet all day - to have to go up and down ladders constantly. You have to be able to be maneuverable, and even with the knowledge that he would eventually receive a prosthetic leg and walk again, it was very obvious that my dad had been forced into early retirement. Suddenly he was either confined to a wheelchair or using a walker, going through chemotherapy and living in a house that he had built himself, but never with wheelchair accessibility in mind. To say my dad persevered would be an understatement. My dad thrived. Al overcame his amputation and flourished. While he could no longer work as a carpenter full-time, he filled his hours by taking on new hobbies, such as wood carving and stained-glass making. In the years since his amputation, he has carved dozens of figurines for his friends, children, and grandchildren (with each figure missing their right leg and having a purple prosthetic to match his own). Projects around the house that he'd been putting off became his focus, including raising a sunken floor to make it flush with the rest of the home, and adding a handicapped-accessible bathroom. And when we received the terrible news that his cancer had returned to the remainder of his leg, and an additional above-the-knee amputation would be necessary, it barely slowed him down. All it meant was a larger prosthetic with a mechanical knee that even paired with a smartphone app. It was not fair that Al's life was turned upside down with a cancer diagnosis - that both his career and his leg were taken from him. But where most would buckle under the pressure and injustice, my dad stood tall on his own two feet (one flesh, one metal), and taught me and my entire family an invaluable lesson in perseverance, strength, and showed us all how blessed we are to still have him with us. I wholeheartedly support Missouri House Bill 404 designating April as Limb Loss Awareness Month. All Missourians should come together to celebrate the strength of those who have lost a limb and found the strength to carry on in their lives. I thank Rep. Aldridge for bringing the Bill forward and look forward to celebrating Limb Loss Awareness Month with my dad and my entire family.

---Jacob Voss, J.D.5577 Lindenwood Ave.St. Louis, MO 63109