

Bridgette Norring
508 17th St. West
Hastings, MN 55033
02/09/2022

The Honorable Senator Seeberger
95 University Avenue W.,
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2109
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Seeberger & Committee Administrator Kaplan,

I am writing today in support of SF2659. April 4th, 2020, will forever be a day etched into my family's mind – and not in a good way. April 4th, is the day my youngest son, Caden, discovered his older brother, Devin Norring, unresponsive in his bed. I'll never forget my son's voice calling out for help and rushing up the stairs to Devin's bedroom only to discover my son lying there lifeless. Devin was 19 years old. Devin will forever be 19 years old.

Devin was intelligent. He loved playing football and skateboarding. He would spend countless hours out front of our house pushing himself, his body to the limits, all for the sake of landing some of the hardest tricks on his bike. He was his older sister, Hayley, and younger brother, Caden's fiercest protector. Devin had a passion for writing, singing, and producing his own music. He had a sense of humor that could put a smile on anyone's face. We truly miss the laughter and his unique laugh.

In the months leading up to Devin's death, he had been experiencing blackout migraines and dental pain from several cracked molars. With the lockdown being implemented earlier that week, his MRI and dental appointments were cancelled. Unbeknownst to my husband and I, the young man who would later go on to leave Devin to die, connected him to a ring of well-known alleged drug dealers in Hastings – young adults my son's age, advertising on Snapchat, Percocet's. What Devin, and many others like Devin, didn't know was that the pills they were being sold were fake and lethal. What Devin got was a pill that contained 100% pure illicit fentanyl – he stood zero chance especially when the person he was with chose to leave my home without saying a word or calling for help.

The death toll is rising every day. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, four Minnesotans die every day to drug poisoning. Every day families like mine are waking up to find their children or loved one's dead in what should be the safest place in the world –within their own homes. As parents who created these remarkable human beings and brought them into this world, you can never fully fathom what it's like to know that your child lay there to paralyzed from this poison as it turned their bodies against itself to even call out for you to help them. You will never truly understand what its like to replay that day over and over – and will continue to do so for the rest of your life wondering what you could've done differently had you known what illicit fentanyl was in the first place. I pray you never experience the nightmare myself and my fellow Angel families now live with every day.

Devin's death certificate reads "cause of death: acute fentanyl toxicity. Manner of death: accidental overdose." Other than right now, you will never hear me say those words. My son, along with thousands of others in Minnesota, were poisoned – they were deceived to death. In fact, Devin, and the thousands of others across our great state according to Minnesota Statute 609.195 (subd. b) are victims of third-degree murder – our Minnesota Legislators passed that bill years ago with the intent of holding those responsible for our loved one's deaths accountable. I implore you to pass SF2659 to give our law enforcement officials and county attorneys the proper means to hold these individuals responsible for supplying the poison to our loved ones before they have the chance to kill them.

In the three years since Devin was killed, my family has sat in multiple court hearings with both of his alleged killers. We watched them use and abuse our court system in multiple counties. We watched as they were slapped on the wrist multiple times and set free back into our community to do it all over again because the laws here are outdated. We watched as they hopped on Snapchat from the court's parking lot laughing and making a mockery out of the judge and the courts while putting up a story advertising their poisonous pills. The weekends were always the worst seeing them with big baggies of every color under the sun's pills – sometimes telling the "audience" they had "the real deal", "real scripts". They knew they weren't real. Their victims however, didn't. It took the joint effort of the Dakota County Drug Task Force along with the help of the DEA to finally get one of the alleged suspects in Devin's case off of Hastings streets after being caught in Scott County with over 900 fentanyl pills; days prior to that arrest he was arrested in Hennepin County with over 450 fentanyl pills. The other alleged suspect is dead from a suspected fentanyl overdose.

I give praise to our Dakota County Drug Task Force and Hastings PD who never gave up on bringing them to justice. Rep. Baker said it best last session when this same bill was in front of the House of Representatives, and I'll paraphrase, "Fentanyl should be in a classification in its own above heroin due to it being 50-100x more potent." That one statement has stuck with me since last session.

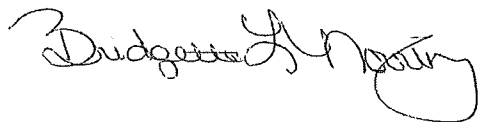
Since last session, we are now seeing even deadlier synthetics such as Xylazine and ISO become more prevalent here in Minnesota. The DEA just issued an alert today, March 21, 2023, in regard to Xylazine being found in all U.S. states. Xylazine is Narcan resistant – our children, first-time experimenters and those with a substance use disorder stand no chance if law enforcement cannot get these individuals poisoning them off our streets. These are not the drugs of days past.

It makes me sick to think of all the lives these individuals potentially killed or make sick with addiction, and those they made sick with addiction that led up to their tragic deaths. It makes me physically sick to think of the countless hours and the money the Dakota County Drug Task Force and Hastings Police spent on just the two individuals in Devin's case alone. They are not the only agency seizing fentanyl from our streets only for the courts to return these killers back to our streets. Had SF2659 been in place years ago when it was first introduced, our County Prosecutor's could've used it to get these individuals off the streets before young adults like Devin had their lives stolen from them.

I call upon all of you to step up and protect our children, our future. This is the third year in a row that I know of that this bill has come before you. The problem isn't going away. This isn't about locking up

those with a substance use disorder; this is about getting the dealers preying on our children and loved ones off of our streets so that our children and loved ones have a chance at life, a chance at recovery. This is about protecting our future generation and those to come. My son, along with the other Angels did not want to die. Devin, Natalia, Tyler, Alaina, Jose, Shawna, Travis, Seth, Josh, Daniel, Nicholas, and the list of Minnesota Angels goes on had lives; they had dreams they will never see come to fruition; they had families that would trade places with them in a heartbeat. Please, pass SF2659.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bridgette Norring". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bridgette Norring

