

March 24, 2024

Health and Human Services Committee
Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave, St Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Wiklund and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to ask for your full support of SF 1303, to start a Count the Kicks pilot program in the state of Minnesota.

My daughter Solveig Sofia Johnson was born still on February 29, 2012 at 33.5 weeks gestation. The umbilical cord was wrapped tightly around Solveig's neck 3 times. This is also known as a "triple nuchal cord," and it was very clearly present on the ultrasound photos taken just four days prior to her loss. (I didn't see the cord until I studied the photos more carefully after Solveig's death. Once I knew what to look for, it was very obvious to see.) The cord was also wrapped around her arm and around her abdomen, and there was a true knot in the cord. Solveig was only in the 4% for her size according to the pictures and measurements. Solveig suffered what we believe to be a seizure inside of me as I felt her body flail 200 times over the course of 5 minutes. It was then or shortly there after that I feel she had her demise. I knew about counting kicks, but I don't remember it being emphasized a lot. I may have counted kicks occasionally, but certainly not every day. I believe that between counting kicks and further study of my ultrasound photos on that last ultrasound day that we may have been able to intervene and deliver Solveig early as she was at a viable age. The loss of my precious baby girl forever changed me and my family. We will always be grateful for her life and that she carried weight in this world.

Just over one year later, I gave birth to a healthy baby boy. His pregnancy was highly monitored under the supervision of MN Perinatology, with appointments at least one or two times a week. I was daily doing my kick counts and using a rented home doppler unit anytime I felt scared. I went to the hospital at least once a week for extra monitoring because I wanted to make sure everything was okay. If I hadn't been paying such close attention and if I hadn't had such close monitoring by my medical group the next time around, I very well may have lost my new little boy as well because the umbilical cord was also around his neck. It was compressing and he had to be delivered urgently via c-section at 37 weeks gestation. I'm beyond grateful that his life was spared and that I had better tools and knowledge to carry on through that pregnancy.

Please fund this important pilot program to educate expectant parents about the importance of fetal movement monitoring. Let's help families bring their babies home safely from the hospital.



On behalf of my family and all the families in Minnesota,
thank you for acting urgently on this matter!

Sincerely,

Melody J. Johnson
Arden Hills, MN