

STATE OF KANSAS

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ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
RANKING MEMBER: FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
ETHICS, ELECTIONS &  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
JOINT COMMITTEES  
MEMBER: RULES AND REGULATIONS  
FOR STATE AGENCIES  
CORRECTIONS AND JUVENILE  
JUSTICE OVERSIGHT

January 20, 2022

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB42**

The Senate on Public Health and Welfare

Chair: Senator Richard Hilderbrand

Vice-Chair: Senator Beverly Gossage

Ranking Minority Member: Senator Pat Pettey

Senator Molly Baumgardner, Senator Renee Erickson, Senator Cindy Holscher,

Senator Kristen O'Shea, Senator Mark Steffen and Senator Mike Thompson

Rita Williams Thompson - My daughter Charmaine's story

Sunrise 10/12/1979 - Sunset 02/17/2021.

Homegoing Friday 02/26/2021

Old Mission Chapel @ 21st and Hillside

This is by far the most painful feeling I have ever experienced in my life. Losing my mother and my brother was, I thought the worst pain in the world. But the loss of a child that you carry in your belly is overwhelming. I have been very private about my daughter, but I feel there is a need to share my daughter Charmaine's story for two reasons:

The first is, there is no reason that my daughter, Charmaine should have been born as early as she was. I had expressed to my doctor on three different visits, that something was wrong as I had swelling in feet, legs, and hands however, his answer was, just watch your salt intake. I did that and my condition worsened as nothing else by the doctor was advised. My concerns were completely dismissed. The second is, if her story can help prevent any other premature births where expectant mothers have shared their health concerns that were not validated or addressed by their doctors, then all she had endured in her life will be a benefit to many.

Charmaine Venice Williams was born to Rita Clara Williams on October 12, 1979, in Wichita, KS. Due to complications from Renal Toxemia and Eclampsia, Charmaine and her fighting spirit burst into this world 4 months early, weighing 1lb and 6 ounces. The Doctors said she would not survive through the night, but what did they know, She showed them! She had a four month stay at St. Joseph Hospital, and then went home. She was still so tiny that she could only wear doll clothes. Learning how to take care of such a tiny baby was a challenge for her Mom, Rita, but with family support from her Mother, and family, Rita figured out how to understand Charmaine's non-verbal expressions. Charmaine never walked or talked, but that didn't stop her from expressing her feelings. When she was happy, she would smile that beautiful smile. When she liked something, she had this cute giggle. When she was mad or upset, she would pout and stick out her bottom lip.

As Charmaine got older, she endured increasing medical challenges. For forty-one years she fought through every single challenge that came her way, and there were many. Charmaine fought hard and endured a lot, but this last medical challenge proved to be her last battle.

When I saw Charmaine, three weeks ago after what would be the last surgery she would endure, she smiled that beautiful smile as if to say, Love you Mom, but I am tired and I am ready. I want to be with my family in heaven. She no longer needs her wheelchair, because she can walk through the gates of heaven with open arms to be with her heavenly family, My Mom, Bernice, my brothers Stephen and Randy, her cousins Quincy and Heather and the rest of her loving family. I love you my precious Charmaine.

Finally, be an advocate for your own health. Question what doctors tell you because they are not always right.

