

Dear Governor Sandoval,

My name is Jill Benzing and I am a local Reno resident. My husband and I have a 8 year old daughter with cerebral palsy, of whom is on the mild end, and has the possibility of being a productive citizen, go to college, and live independently, provided we maintain her current therapy schedule at this young age. In the event that any one of these 10 insurance plans is passed, our child will be left out in the cold!

I would like to stress the importance of continued therapies and medical care for our little girl, and all children in Nevada with special needs, at this young age. This is the only way to prevent the mass care that will be needed as our daughter gets older, in the event that these therapies are not covered by the state throughout her childhood and adolescence. It is absolutely mandatory that we maintain the current level of habilitative care that is covered to date. I do see that rehabilitative care is covered in your 10 plans that are available. However, our children do not need "rehabilitative care" as they have not had an accident...THEY WERE BORN THIS WAY! Our daughter did not choose this, nor did we, however it is my duty as a parent to charge forward and protect her care at all costs.

Upon reading all 10 of these options for the base insurance care in Nevada, beginning in 2014, it is very apparent that children with special needs have been significantly overlooked. As a parent of a child with cerebral palsy, it is outlandish to me that this care has not even been considered in any of the plans. Therapies should be comprehensive for all, not just children with autism. This insurance coverage should not be discriminated based on age, type of disability, level of disability, and type of therapy needed. These decisions should not be left to the insurance companies, but to the professionals working with our children to give them the best care during this tremendous time of growth.

Financially, we are like any other struggling middle class family in Nevada. My husband is a Project Manager, and upon having our daughter years ago, I had to stop working Full time to give her the care she needs. We have United private insurance, that covers absolutely nothing

and costs a fortune! So without Medicaid, we would be in serious trouble. I would imagine that if this insurance change were to happen, I would have to get a full time job in order to pay for her medical care, and she would not even get what she needs, as I would not have the time to take her to all of her therapies and doctor appointments all over the West Coast. It is very apparent to me that there is not one person on your staff, of whom is making these insurance decisions, that has a child in their lives with special needs. Again, this is not a life any of us has chosen, however it is something we are doing the best we can with the resources given. We, just like any other parents, want to give our children everything possible. When I say that, I mean the chance to walk, speak, use the bathroom independently, eat independently, and go to school. When you use the statement, "I want to give my children everything possible", you most likely mean education, vacations, soccer, gymnastics, skiing, swimming, etc. I hope you can see the difference. Our child's struggles are not yours, I do understand that, however the taxpayers will pay significantly for our children later, in the event that our government chooses not to provide services now.

Lastly, I see that our children could get therapy services when they turn 22...what??? By that time, the brain will not be as malleable and accepting to change, so the government would need to spend more money on our children in the long run. I would advise that this be reassessed ASAP. This decision would put many small businesses out of business, as all of the therapy clinics in the area are local small businesses. I don't believe that it is your goal to put people out of work, however I also don't think this has been thought out enough to make a decision within the next few days.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions, and I do hope to have the chance to attend the next meeting regarding this matter.

Kindly,
Jill Benzing