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Testimony in Support of HB 2219

Before the Kansas Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

Hon. Chairwoman Schmidt, Vice Chair Bollier, Ranking Member Kelly and Members of the Committee:

My name is Brodie Cullumber and I am a type 1 diabetic. Unlike type 2 diabetes where the body is resistant to insulin, my body no longer produces insulin. I was diagnosed four years ago after a trip to the hospital to treat what my doctor thought was mono. While there I had blood drawn and it was discovered that my blood sugar was nearly 600. The normal range is 70-140. I was taken by ambulance to Children's Mercy Hospital where I spent two days in the ICU and four days in the hospital.

When I was discharged, my life was different. I had a blood glucose meter that I would use at least four times a day. For the first several months after my diagnosis I took shots of insulin each day, and I hated needles. Now I have a wearable insulin pump that is attached to me nearly every hour of the day. Every meal requires computation of carbs, calculating my dose of insulin and testing myself to make sure my blood sugar levels stay in range. While I can't always eat, drink, or do what my friends are doing I work hard to make sure that being diabetic doesn't define who I am.

Yet I am one of the lucky ones. Other kids that I have been in classes or at camp with received their diagnosis many years before me, some as young as 5. Some have celiac disease and are very allergic to gluten. Still others have thyroid or kidney problems in addition to their diabetes. We will all share a lifetime of increased risks for other health problems; financial burdens for testing supplies, insulin, and increased medical checkups; and worst for people my age, being treated differently than everybody else.

HB 2219 won't cure my diabetes or change the path for many of my friends who have type 1. But what it can do is increase awareness about diabetes, help put information in one place, and most importantly require action plans so policy makers like you can know what next steps to take to keep up the fight against diabetes. My hope is to be part of the effort to eventually make sure no other young people have to face type 1 diabetes. HB 2219 is a step in that direction and I ask you to support it and pass it favorably. Thank you.