

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Rachelle Peck. I am the widow of Jeremy Peck and the mother of our four adopted children. My husband and I met while attending college in Wisconsin and were married in 2007. Together we built our family through adoption, welcoming three children through the foster care system and one child through a special-needs infant adoption.

Jeremy Peck was 39 years old at the time of his death. He worked in research at Penn State where he was required to test weekly for Covid. Jeremy was active in church and was a devoted husband and father deeply involved in the daily care of our family.

In January 2022, COVID-19 spread through our household. Our children and I recovered without significant complications. Jeremy developed symptoms that were later diagnosed as pneumonia. He went to a local emergency room, where imaging showed pneumonia but was discharged with no treatment. When his condition didn't improve, he returned to the hospital by ambulance and was admitted to the COVID unit. Due to hospital restrictions, I was not permitted to be with him and relied primarily on communication from him regarding his care.

During his hospitalization, both my husband and I became concerned about the care he was receiving. A friend informed us about a specialized COVID clinic in another state, and Jeremy decided he wanted to pursue treatment there. While he was still hospitalized, I consulted with the clinic regarding his condition and treatment options. It was our expressed will not to receive Remdisivir while at the hospital. I further called and spoke to a nurse stating this. The nurse who took my call became quiet, asked why I was making that request, and then responded, "Ok."

Within approximately 24 hours of admission, Jeremy and I made the decision for him to leave the hospital and pursue treatment at the out-of-state clinic. As we were leaving, an attending physician told me, "If you take him out, you are killing your husband." Given interactions with the hospital we proceeded with the discharge. When I walked up to my husband, a nurse quietly said to me, "You go girl".

We then traveled to the out-of-state clinic, where additional laboratory testing was performed. The clinic reviewed both its own testing and Jeremy's hospital laboratory testing. The clinic head nurse specifically asked him if he received Remdisivir at the hospital and his reply was "I told them I didn't want it." To which she replied "your lab results show they gave it to you and we are seeing a lot of this has happened to our patients from hospitals". Testing showed decreased kidney function and elevated liver enzymes. The clinic further informed us Jeremy had no underlying risk factors to have predicted such an outcome.

Nine days after exiting the hospital Jeremy died leaving behind four young children.

I respectfully ask the Senate to review and investigate the experiences of patients and families during the COVID-19 pandemic, including issues involving informed consent, communication between hospitals and family members, access to medical records, and the treatments

administered to hospitalized patients. I appreciate the opportunity to share my family's experience for the Congressional record.

Rachelle Peck