

## *Chapter 2*



Marissa Varcho <marissavarcho@gmail.com>

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## Rebuttle of Marissa K Varcho Testimony for SB 43

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LH1943@aol.com <LH1943@aol.com>  
To: marissavarcho@gmail.com

Fri, Oct 11, 2013 at 9:45 PM

From: Linda L Hutchison  
1952 Ironton Dr Telephone 614-332-1867  
Columbus, Ohio 43228 Email [llh1943@aol.com](mailto:llh1943@aol.com)

October 11, 2013

TO: Marissa K Varcho  
Attorney At Law  
4799 Seven Lakes Place  
Powell, Ohio 43065

Dear Ms. Varcho,

I am in receipt of your email to Chairman Coley 11 sent on Oct. 8,2013. I too sent a letter of testimony and appeared to testify on Oct. 9 to read said testimony. I also appeared back in June in front of the Senate as well. In addition I have appeared on a Television Talk Show and two Radio Talk Shows in support of Senate Bill 43 and House Bill 104.

I am the author of In My Petticoat: A Touch of Insanity. This book is a memoir of my life and the unsuspecting, unplanned for, and unheard of mental illness in children let alone my child, this was the sixties. To say from about the age of two that my son exhibited signs of a mental dysfunction is putting it mildly. We also were unaware of how much genetics played in the predisposition of faulty genes passing on certain traits.

It is here where I want to congratulate you on your acceptance of your disease and or brain dysfunction which ever you prefer. Your ability to grasp what was needed to keep you stabilized is to say the least awe inspiring. For all the other testimonies you passed along are also comforting to know that there is hope for some. However, for the hundreds of thousands who are not able to be as blessed as you and the others, they need a clarification of a law that is already on the books and that can only happen with the passing of SB 43 and HB 104. My son proved this need with his life.

While I acknowledge your education in law and your obvious intellect, I have lived a totally different life from you

and your background. I understand that there is a thin line when it comes to civil liberties and the right to refuse treatment and be forced into treatment against your will. When my son was forced into treatment due to eminent harm to himself it took six weeks to stabilize him on medications. Another couple of weeks to tweak the dosages. He then entered college and graduated with honors. Within six months he was dead. Why? Because he stopped taking his med's and stopped going to therapy. And he refused to go back to the hospital to be stabilized again.

How did he die? It took him four months of several overdoses and a flight out of a hospital emergency room wrapped only in a sheet and barefooted into a snow storm. How was that handled? They put him in jail for 6 days.

These bills are at least an attempt to clarify laws to save lives. While 'Obamacare" is not perfect it is better than having millions of American having to go without health care. I'm sure over time and with a few trials and errors they will get it right. By the way have you investigated the Franklin County Coroners records of suicides lately? How about accidental deaths. While my son ran out into Interstate traffic and was killed, his death is listed as an accident. Was it?

I'm hoping you will read my book, you can by picking it up at the library. It is also available on Amazon and Kindle. My heart is broken beyond repair. I will do everything I can to keep someone else's mother from the pain of having to watch her son or daughter suffer so only to die an untimely death.

Attached are the testimonies from both hearings I attended. I feel you should have access to mine as well. Again I am so pleased that your life, while perhaps not perfect, is giving you the opportunity to live as close to ideal as anyone can expect. That's all I wanted for my son too.

Sincerely,

Linda L Hutchison

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## 2 attachments



**Civil Commitment Committee.doc**

17K



**CivilJusticeCommitteeWitnessSlip.docx**

14K



Marissa Varcho <marissavarcho@gmail.com>

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## Rebuttle of Marissa K Varcho Testimony for SB 43

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**Marissa Varcho** <marissavarcho@gmail.com>

Sat, Oct 12, 2013 at 3:19 PM

To: Lh1943@aol.com

Cc: coley@ohiosenate.gov

Bcc: Geoffrey Collver <gcollver@disabilityrightsohio.org>

Dear Linda,

I cannot thank you enough for reaching out to me. That you would do so, is an honor. I do not have the words sufficient to express the empathy I hold for you and for all mothers in your position, who have a lost a child to this ugly, ugly disorder. My heart goes out to you, because I cannot think of anything more heartbreaking and completely unbearable for a human being to live through, than the premature loss of a child (at any age). I myself am not a parent yet, I do not know whether I will ever be blessed with the opportunity to be so, but I have great respect for all parents who care so much as to go out of their way to protect their children from harm.

Within the American society that we so presently live in today, though, I just do not know how any parent of a child with a mental illness would know where to begin, how to start the process in order to protect and save their child.

Accordingly, my effort in the Senate these past two weeks and upcoming efforts as well, will be to educate anyone who will listen, as to what it feels like to be bipolar. That is what I know, and that is the information that I have to offer. I want to help others understand what it has been like for me specifically, from within the thoughts that ran through my very own head, to live with all of the discrimination and condescension and cruelty that I have so generously been dealt, merely as a result of having been born with this physical disorder. I think with such an understanding, we can begin to move the entire discussion onto a new track with an empowering message for all. A message that I think would be healing to all parties involved, including those who live with brain chemistry disorders, those who love persons who struggle with mental illness, parents who were denied the support that they needed and lost a child to the struggle, parents who are currently without support *still* and in the process of watching a child lose their struggle with mental illness, and probably most importantly, parents who have a child who has just been diagnosed.

I was contacted this past Thursday by a woman who I'd met just a few weeks prior, with whom I had shared my written testimony this past Wednesday night. She shared with me that her pre-adolescent child had just been diagnosed with bipolar this past Tuesday, and yet that she was not horrified by the diagnosis, but rather thought of me and how well I am doing and still has hope. This is the place where I believe we need to re-start the discussion. We need to give parents hope. We need to alleviate all of these fears. Just because there may be a small percentage of the mentally ill population who may not ever be able to function without others' control, does not mean that we should infer that this is the norm. I do not believe that laws should be passed by my state legislature to reinforce a notion that we are all hopelessly and helplessly dysfunctional victims. This is simply not the case, and if it has been in any set of circumstance to-date, I would urge anyone to look first to the role which our society has played, in refusing to support parents like you who wanted so desperately to figure out how to help, and persons like me who wanted nothing more than to overcome the suffering so that we can help others out of it as well.

In that regard, then, I think we have a common goal. If you would be amenable, I would love to have the opportunity to meet with you and to talk about these issues we have at stake. I believe there is much I could learn yet, from a person with a perspective such as yours.

Please feel free to call me at (614) 633-5155 at your earliest convenience. That is my cell phone and we can arrange to meet somewhere in the middle, if you would be so interested.

Please note also, that I have CC'd Chairman Coley on this email, so that he is aware that this discourse is beginning to take place within our community.

Finally, thank you again for reaching out. I am hoping for and look forward to getting the chance to talk.

Sincerely,

**Marissa Varcho**

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## Rebuttle of Marissa K Varcho Testimony for SB 43

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LH1943@aol.com <LH1943@aol.com>

Sun, Oct 13, 2013 at 11:44 AM

To: marissavarcho@gmail.com, coley@ohiosenate.gov

Dear Marissa,

Your reply to me indicates that you are a very caring person and interested in helping others that suffer from what you described as a "ugly, ugly disorder." I agree mental illness is a very ugly disorder.

My desire to have the Senate and the House pass these Bills is not because I believe they will be the total answer to helping those with mental illnesses concur their illnesses; it's so I can help keep someone else's child alive. It's because I wanted to keep my child alive. I needed someone else with more power than I to stop him from killing himself before he could come to terms with his disorder.

The only way my son was going to live was to have a time out. Either the State would have to help me/him help him or I would have to have had the resources to send him to (\$) private rehab of some sort. Neither one was available. The State and his doctors said no and I didn't have the financial resources for the later.

I believe I know where you are coming from and I am hopeful that you will always remain in control of your illness. Passing of these Bills into law will affect only the mentally ill that are not as stable as you. I use the word stable as I would with anyone taking medications or treatments to control any illness. It will give their caregivers a voice in how to save their lives and in some cases the lives of others.

I agree that losing control of any of your rights is not what anyone ever expects to face. However, in certain cases where one can not be responsible for making decisions based on reasonable certainties, like jumping off bridges, laying down on railroad tracks, hanging oneself with a bed sheet, putting a gun to your head and pulling the trigger, sitting in a car with the muffler exhaust swirling about your head, inhaling intoxicants to numb the pain, running out into traffic or suicide by cop. There are reasons that we do not let felons and the mentally ill by guns.

All who have ended their life in the above manners have all given warning signs of this emanate act or quality of their remaining life. In addition to the final act, the years of preceding pain for the individual and their loved ones. The toll of destruction to families and property.

As you can most likely tell I am a avid reader, especially about the subject of mental illness. It is my belief that had my son had another opportunity to bring his illnesses under control and regain stability, he would be alive today. It is also my belief that he may have had to reenter a facility again for additional treatments from time to time.

I haven't walked in your shoes nor in my son's. So I do not know exactly how you feel. I have read memoir's of those that have. You might want to read: Manic, by Terri Cheney or Madness, by Marya Hornbacher. From these two women I have learned that eventually if you live long enough you will come to terms with your disorder.

I wrote this as a beginning step to my writing my memoir four years ago. From this piece I wrote my book. After reading this you may want to read my book, and if you still want to meet with me I would be happy to meet you.

Linda

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**A Knock on the Door 2.doc**

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## Rebuttle of Marissa K Varcho Testimony for SB 43

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**Marissa Varcho** <marissavarcho@gmail.com>

Sun, Oct 13, 2013 at 4:58 PM

To: Lh1943@aol.com

Cc: coley@ohiosenate.cov

Bcc: Geoffrey Collver <gcollver@disabilityrightsohio.org>, Rachel Varcho <rsteffanni@yahoo.com>

Dear Linda,

Thank you for your reply. Honestly, I really don't know what to say or even where to begin. To try, though...

With regard to S.B.43 and H.B.104, current law in fact already permits court-ordered out-patient treatment, so there is no need to change the law. We should study Summit County, Ohio closely and see why it is they can make the current law work whereas other counties for some reason cannot. That is issue no.1.

No.2, "trial and error" is not appropriate when it comes to the civil liberties of a human being, especially as it relates to one's own body.

And finally, no.3, these may be painful questions, but I would urge you to ask yourself why it is your son had to be forced into treatment to begin with, and why he may not have *wanted* to take the medications and do the therapy and in all honesty, why he did not want to live. You cannot understand the mental and emotional suffering one goes through with a mental illness, unless you have experienced it yourself. I do not believe that life should be forced upon us, I believe it is a choice that we should be able to make for ourselves. The pain is just too great - to allow others to force us to live in the absence of the support we need to relieve the pain is nothing short of cruel and inhumane treatment.

I apologize that our suffering has wreaked havoc upon your life and your circumstances and your property, but the answer is not to seek to control us. Rather, it is to provide us with the actual medical care and open-minded support networks that we need to overcome our disorders.

I understand that you find solace in a belief that, had you been able to control your son, he would be alive today. But I would question, at what cost? And again urge you to consider the questions in no.3 above. The fact of the matter is that you cannot force a human being to take medication, they will spit it out. You cannot force a human being to do therapy, they will remain silent or lie. Force is not the answer, I'm not quite sure why you believe it is. That's exactly what your son was running from.

Now I have not read your testimony again yet, nor the other documentation that you have provided me, as I believe your recount of all the different methods of suicide in your email today was sensationalization enough. I do intend to read your materials though, and I will get back with you when I have a chance, but please try to understand how your opinions and statements may affect others, not just yourself.

And lastly, I'm not sure what preconceived notions you have made of me, but I have struggled to manage my disorder all of my life, I struggle today, and I will struggle tomorrow and every day thereafter as well. The medications do not work well and in many cases make the situation worse, the side effects are extreme, and while therapy helps, it does not solve the issue. This is not an illness that you take some medication for and it is healed. It is and will *always* be a struggle so long that I am alive. I'm not sure if you understand this, but I would hope if not, that you would begin to try.

I was married in October 2010 to a man I loved very much. He knew I was bipolar from the time we first began dating in June 2009. I thought he loved me very much too. Turned out he was mentally and emotionally abusive. Turned out when things consequently got tough with my mental and emotional *disorder*, he felt no obligation to stick around and provide any support. He was gone with the wind, like so many are in this society, when faced with a person like me who has a mental disorder causing emotional instability.

I was a *mess* after all of the abuse, I had been beaten down so hard. Before I realized what was going on and that I was in the midst of an abusive relationship, he had me believing that nobody else would ever want to be with me, that I had no individual self-worth, and that I had no professional talent. I felt *worthless*, I tried to get help, the emotional pain was more than any human being could possibly stand. Neither my psychiatrist nor my psychologist could stop the pain. I overdosed on anti-anxiety meds 9/2012. I was hospitalized in the locked psychiatric ward for a week at Riverside 9West. It was the worst experience I'd ever gone through in my entire life.

There's nothing quite like having to let the hair grow out on your legs and in your armpits because they won't let you use a razor. Nothing quite like plaque building up on your teeth because they won't let you use floss. Nothing quite like staring at a door that has locked you in to keep the rest of the world safe from harm. Nothing quite like all of this happening after you desperately sought out help, and there was none to be found.

Please do not patronize me with your hopes that I will always remain in control of my illness.

I understand that you lost a son, I understand that you are upset, but this is not your fight to fight. It is not about *you* and the inconvenience you have been caused. It is about the suffering that those of us innately go through in having been dealt the hand of mental illness, and then of course the discrimination and condescension and cruelty that we all have consequently forced upon us by this acquiescent society. We do not need people like you controlling us. We need people to support us, and to *help* us figure it out for ourselves. No other solution is lasting anyways. In the absence of acceptance and understanding and opportunity, suicide will always remain a threat.

I do not feel that it would be a good time to meet immediately, as I am obviously upset. But I will read through the materials you have emailed and follow up when I can. I work a fulltime job, am managing my illness, and working as an advocate in my spare time, so I cannot promise you how soon it will be. In the meantime, I would urge you to try to open your mind to the suffering your son may have felt, and provide him the compassion he deserves in allowing him to rest in peace.

Marissa Varcho

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## Supplementary Materials -- Opposition to S.B.43/H.B.104

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Marissa Varcho <marissavarcho@gmail.com>

Mon, Oct 14, 2013 at 12:27 AM

To: hite@ohiosenate.gov, gardner@ohiosenate.gov, bacon@ohiosenate.gov, beagle@ohiosenate.gov, lehner@ohiosenate.gov, jones@ohiosenate.gov, seitz@ohiosenate.gov, kearney@ohiosenate.gov, widener@ohiosenate.gov, brown@ohiosenate.gov, faber@ohiosenate.gov, manning@ohiosenate.gov, uecker@ohiosenate.gov, tavares@ohiosenate.gov, hughes@ohiosenate.gov, peterson@ohiosenate.gov, eklund@ohiosenate.gov, jordan@ohiosenate.gov, balderson@ohiosenate.gov, smith@ohiosenate.gov, obhof@ohiosenate.gov, skindell@ohiosenate.gov, patton@ohiosenate.gov, Nina Turner <tuner@ohiosenate.gov>, burke@ohiosenate.gov, larose@ohiosenate.gov, sawyer@ohiosenate.gov, oelslager@ohiosenate.gov, gentile@ohiosenate.gov, schaffer@ohiosenate.gov, cafaro@ohiosenate.gov, Senator Schiavoni <schiaivoni@ohiosenate.gov>, rep1@ohiohouse.gov, rep2@ohiohouse.gov, rep3@ohiohouse.gov, rep4@ohiohouse.gov, rep5@ohiohouse.gov, rep6@ohiohouse.gov, rep7@ohiohouse.gov, rep8@ohiohouse.gov, rep9@ohiohouse.gov, rep10@ohiohouse.gov, rep11@ohiohouse.gov, rep12@ohiohouse.gov, rep13@ohiohouse.gov, rep14@ohiohouse.gov, rep15@ohiohouse.gov, rep16@ohiohouse.gov, rep17@ohiohouse.gov, "Rep18@ohiohouse.gov" <rep18@ohiohouse.gov>, rep19@ohiohouse.gov, rep20@ohiohouse.gov, rep21@ohiohouse.gov, rep22@ohiohouse.gov, rep23@ohiohouse.gov, rep24@ohiohouse.gov, rep25@ohiohouse.gov, rep26@ohiohouse.gov, rep27@ohiohouse.gov, rep28@ohiohouse.gov, rep29@ohiohouse.gov, rep30@ohiohouse.gov, rep31@ohiohouse.gov, rep32@ohiohouse.gov, rep33@ohiohouse.gov, rep34@ohiohouse.gov, rep35@ohiohouse.gov, rep36@ohiohouse.gov, rep37@ohiohouse.gov, rep38@ohiohouse.gov, rep39@ohiohouse.gov, rep40@ohiohouse.gov, rep41@ohiohouse.gov, rep42@ohiohouse.gov, rep43@ohiohouse.gov, rep44@ohiohouse.gov, rep45@ohiohouse.gov, rep46@ohiohouse.gov, rep47@ohiohouse.gov, rep48@ohiohouse.gov, rep49@ohiohouse.gov, rep50@ohiohouse.gov, rep51@ohiohouse.gov, rep52@ohiohouse.gov, rep53@ohiohouse.gov, rep54@ohiohouse.gov, rep55@ohiohouse.gov, rep56@ohiohouse.gov, rep57@ohiohouse.gov, rep58@ohiohouse.gov, rep59@ohiohouse.gov, rep60@ohiohouse.gov, rep61@ohiohouse.gov, rep62@ohiohouse.gov, rep63@ohiohouse.gov, rep64@ohiohouse.gov, rep65@ohiohouse.gov, rep66@ohiohouse.gov, rep67@ohiohouse.gov, rep68@ohiohouse.gov, rep69@ohiohouse.gov, rep70@ohiohouse.gov, rep71@ohiohouse.gov, rep72@ohiohouse.gov, rep73@ohiohouse.gov, rep74@ohiohouse.gov, rep75@ohiohouse.gov, rep76@ohiohouse.gov, rep77@ohiohouse.gov, rep78@ohiohouse.gov, rep79@ohiohouse.gov, rep80@ohiohouse.gov, rep81@ohiohouse.gov, rep82@ohiohouse.gov, rep83@ohiohouse.gov, rep84@ohiohouse.gov, rep85@ohiohouse.gov, rep86@ohiohouse.gov, rep87@ohiohouse.gov, rep88@ohiohouse.gov, rep89@ohiohouse.gov, rep90@ohiohouse.gov, rep91@ohiohouse.gov, rep92@ohiohouse.gov, rep93@ohiohouse.gov, rep94@ohiohouse.gov, rep95@ohiohouse.gov, rep96@ohiohouse.gov, rep97@ohiohouse.gov, rep98@ohiohouse.gov, rep99@ohiohouse.gov, coley@ohiosenate.gov  
Bcc: Geoffrey Collver <gcollver@disabilityrightsohio.org>, Rachel Varcho <rsteffanni@yahoo.com>, Marissa Varcho <marissavarcho@gmail.com>

To My Ohio Congressional Members:

Please find attached my "Supplementary Materials" as referenced in my Written Testimony submitted in opposition to S.B.43 as it relates to forced treatment upon the mentally ill. I prepared the document attached, entitled "A Guided Tour Through My Bipolar Mind", to specifically help you understand better what it means to live subject to Bipolar I Disorder. It consists of excerpts from real-time journal entries I wrote on the dates indicated by each entry, noting also my age at the time each entry was written.

Please note that I have taken the liberty to provide an Index at the end of the document (pages 66-73), which can be used to cross-reference entries related by topic (i.e. Alone Within Consciousness, Consequence of Disregard for Others' Humanity, Incompetent Mental-Health Professionals, Lacking Support System, Medication Management, Moral Sledgehammer, etc.). As I know you are all very busy persons, the index should hopefully enable you to quickly target the entries that will be of greatest interest to you, as they relate to the different sub-issues affecting the mentally ill.

In addition, please find attached a printout copy of my email conversations with Linda Hutchinson from this past weekend (for chronological order, start at the bottom). Linda is a proponent of S.B.43 and H.B.104, as the mother of a son who passed away after a struggle with mental illness. The conversation highlights the most relevant matter at stake, being the issue of *controlling* the mentally ill versus *supporting* us.

To brief you, **it seems we are going to have a struggle at hand between family members of the mentally ill who feel for some reason they know best, and the individuals who actually live with and struggle to manage these disorders themselves.** Although I cannot be sure without further investigation, it would be my best educated guess that the majority of persons who struggle to manage a mental illness seek to maintain their civil right to make their own medical and healthcare decisions.

As such, I would encourage you to keep in mind that Summit County has already been successful in using court-ordered outpatient treatment under **current** law. We do not need to change the law, we need to change the attitude with which we treat our mentally ill population.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email at [marissavarcho@gmail.com](mailto:marissavarcho@gmail.com) or by phone at (614) 633-5155.

Very Truly Yours,

Marissa Varcho

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## 2 attachments



**Rebuttle of Marissa K Varcho Testimony for SB 43.pdf**

120K



**MKV-SB43 Guide Bipolar Mind.pdf**

2964K