

LISA VAN SYCKEL

■ 5 Mills Court
■ Flemington, NJ 08822

May 5, 2003

Att: Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions

Dear Senators Gregg & Kennedy,

My name is Lisa Van Syckel, and I am a resident of Raritan Township, in New Jersey. I am asking for your support on investigating antidepressant-induced violence and suicide in children and adolescents. I am asking on behalf of our nation's children. My own daughter had been misdiagnosed with depression when she actually had Lyme disease. She had suffered a Paxil-induced self-mutilation, psychosis and suicide attempt. The pharmaceutical companies and physicians are endangering the lives of our children and need to be held accountable.

I had written to President Bush, and needless to say, his response was discouraging. Unlike the President, Senator Corzine took my concerns seriously. He investigated and quickly responded. He shares my belief that this issue should be further investigated and fully supports Congressional hearings. I have also heard from the office of Senator John Edwards and he too fully supports Congressional hearings.

I am forwarding to you a copy of a letter written by Columbine victim Mark Taylor. This letter speaks for itself. Mark Taylor firmly believes that had Eric Harris not been taking the antidepressant Luvox, the tragedy at Columbine would not have occurred.

Cory Baadsgaard, a teen from Washington State who was the starting center on his school basketball team, took 23 classmates and a teacher hostage at gunpoint. After serving 14 months in a juvenile facility, it was determined that Cory's actions were caused by the adverse effects of withdrawing from Paxil and the high dose of Effexor and was later released. Mark and Cory have joined forces together to speak out on the dangers of antidepressants in teens. Please allow their voices to be heard.

In 1998, Mathew Beck, an accountant for the Connecticut Lottery, while on Luvox shot and killed four coworkers. He then shot and killed himself.

April 9, 2002, Officer Edward Lutes of Seaside Heights, NJ, who was highly decorated officer and a member of the SWAT team, while on Luvox massacred five of his neighbors and shot and wounded the police chief who had been his friend, and then shot and killed himself.

Seven weeks after Officer Lutes went on his shooting spree, Solvay Pharmaceuticals removed Luvox from the US market. Was this a coincidence? Maybe.

Please launch an investigation into the role Solvay's drug Luvox had on Mathew Beck, Officer Lutes and Eric Harris' homicidal/suicidal behavior.

In 1997, Nick Mansie (15) of New Jersey, while on Paxil raped and killed his 11-year old neighbor who came to his home to sell cookies. Elizabeth Bush (15), Warrensport, PA while on Paxil shot and injured a classmate. She states it was her intention to kill herself and not her classmate. Camaren Carr (15) Denton, TX while withdrawing from Paxil slit the throat of her 6-year old brother and then buried him in the back yard.

GlaxoSmithKline's own clinical study has shown that 10 children out of 93 became violent and suicidal and had to be hospitalized.

In October, 2002, the Irish Medicines Control Board recalled Paxil and forced GSK to place a "suicide warning" in its package insert.

In 2001, a jury found GSK liable for the homicide/suicide of a Wyoming family.

Thousands of lawsuits have been filed in the US and UK. Matt Miller, 13, Kansas, while on Zoloft hanged himself. Daniel Carter, 15, Florida, while on Zoloft stabbed his uncle 10 times who later died. Jeffrey Smith, 16, New Jersey, while on Zoloft stole a car that belonged to the mother of a friend, and later that night attempted suicide. The medication was immediately suspected. (Jeffrey is the nephew of the late officer Lutes.) Elizabeth Shin while on Celexa self-mutilated, set herself on fire and later died. Elizabeth Rengel (13) while on Celexa, self-mutilated, went to her school with a 9mm gun and shot herself in the head as her classmates watched in horror.

The package insert for Celexa lists Apathy, Aggravated Depression and Suicide attempt as “frequent” psychiatric side effects.

In 1998, the poison control agency reported over 11,000 neurotoxic reactions in children who were on antidepressants, 4,000 of which were reported in children under the age of 6. 21 children died.

On Jan 3, 2003, the FDA approved Prozac for children. How this was allowed to happen is beyond me. I suggest the FDA review independent studies and not the ones that are selected by Eli Lilly. I submit to you two studies. I hope you are alarmed as I was. These clearly show that something really stinks in Washington. It's time to remove the fox from the hen house.

Antidepressants have many serious side-effects including mania, psychosis, seizures, agitation and aggression, and the most deadly--homicides/suicides.

Any medication that has the potential to cause an individual to become homicidal/suicidal should never be placed upon the shelves of our pharmacies.

Our children need your support today! They need to know that they have elected officials who will hear their cries for help. Please allow our children's attorneys, physicians and psychiatrists to present their case. These individuals not only represent the living children, they also represent the dead children. Our goal is to break the hearts of the officials we have elected. It is only then that you will truly understand the depth of pain that they and their families have endured.

Ten days ago, James Sheets (14) stood up in the cafeteria of his school in Red Lion, PA and shot his principal to death, and then killed himself.

Jerome Berlin, a prominent democratic fundraiser and an attorney, was shot and killed by his business partner, who then shot and killed himself.

Were these highly-publicized homicide/suicides antidepressant-induced? Only time will tell.

Can we, as a nation endure another Columbine? We shouldn't have to!! It is our responsibility to protect our nation's children!!! What many believe to have been the cure for what happened at Columbine, was actually the cause.

Please make our nation's children your top priority. Their safety and health are in your hands. Please show strength and courage and demand Congressional hearings into antidepressant-induced violence and suicide. In and children and adolescents!

Never forget that the life a child is priceless, and that our children are our future.

Sincerely,

Lisa L. VanSyckel

International Coalition for Drug Awareness (www.drugawareness.org)

908-237-9098

908-399-0862

cc: Senator Jon Corzine, Senator John Edwards

