



PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

Becoming an unwilling participant in the childhood cancer community, brought light to the vast amount of families impacted by their children being diagnosed with cancer. Emotionally, mentally, financially and spiritually, this is the hardest thing our family has and will ever go through. Our lives will never be okay without our son here.

Tanner McCullough was 6 years old when he was diagnosed with a rare cancer called Translocation Renal Cell Carcinoma. This is a type of kidney cancer that can easily go unnoticed, due to the fact that it grows slowly and people usually do not experience symptoms. Which is why doctors did not believe us, when we told them something was not right with our child.

Simple research from the National Cancer Institute on statistical data about childhood cancer paints a gruesome picture of how childhood cancer is the

leading cause of death by disease past infancy among children in the United States. It has been formally estimated in 2022 that over 15,600 children will be diagnosed with childhood cancer, and 1,780 will die of the disease in the United States.

Tanner passed away at the age of 7 years old. He never once stopped fighting for his life. He was stolen from us because there was no cure for this aggressive and rare type of cancer. We were given hardly any options for treatment. I had to watch my son get more sick and frail by the day, until he eventually left us. His siblings were 3 and 10 at the time and it has caused incurable heartache for us all.

The treatments that were made for the specific type of cancer Tanner had, were horrific to say the least. There are not enough appropriate options for these children. The only ones they presented to us, were only tested on adults. Most of which were barely approved or not approved at all for children. If he had survived, the treatment would likely have killed him shortly after.

I am passionate about finding a cure because I never want another family to feel that same pain, nor do I want to experience it again with either of my other children. I had to hold my son and watch him pass. I desperately wished there

was something I could do to stop it from happening. I wanted so badly to take his pain away from him. But instead, watched his childhood dreams fade away.

The doctors did not find his cancer until it was 10cm. He had to have a major 8.5 hour surgery in another state. We had to move for 3 months during the surgery and for his treatments. There was no place closer that offered what he needed. Even St. Judes was unable to help us treat our son. In the end, the surgery was unsuccessful in getting all of the cancer. It continued to grow rapidly and after 15 months of fighting, our son passed away at 7 years old.

By signing this petition, you are sending an important message to Congress to pass federal laws that will increase funding for childhood cancer research from 4% to 8%. We need 12 million signatures behind this petition to begin lobbying for raising the current funds towards children's cancer research. We are our children's only advocates. Let's also be their voice for change.

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