

SB 801  
support

# Alyssa Wood

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February 2, 2018

Senator Rick Jones  
Chair, Judiciary Committee  
Michigan Senate

**Dear Senator Rick Jones:**

It was in the spring of 2016 and I had a few years of recovery from IV opiate use. However, I was still hanging around people who were in active addiction and using multiple substances. During this time; I was introduced to Tianeptine. At the time, my only knowledge about "T" was that it was an anti-depressant you could order online and it would "tickle" your opiate receptors. Legal, FDA approved, and it was never classified as a controlled substance. The best part? It was undetectable. I could justify using it because of the facts I just mentioned and after all it was "Not Heroin". When I first tried "T" I did not take a liking to it, I didn't understand what the big deal was, and I pretty much stopped talking to those people and using it at that time.

January 2017 is when I had a small relapse on T. It was readily available to me and very cheap. It wasn't long and the same destructive drug seeking behaviors that were present with heroin use returned. I was having a hard time, not being productive and proactive in my recovery. This is when I began to use "T" intravenously. Within a very short time I was using "T" multiple times a day, every day. My relapse got to a point where I could not get out of bed, go to work, have a normal functioning day without "T" in my life. As time passed and I continued to use "T" intravenously, I began to develop infections and abscesses in both of my forearms and my right hand. It took until I had a hole in my right arm for me to go to the hospital and seek treatment not only for my abscesses, but also for my addiction. Despite being full of infection and abscesses I continued to abuse "T" for a couple more weeks because I was terrified of the withdrawal. During that past month, I had tried to stop numerous times, but the withdrawal kept me from staying completely sober from this substance. The withdrawal that I experienced from heroin was shadowed by the withdrawal from this poison. "T" was a very much more intense and aggressive withdraw and detox symptoms are horrific. After all, this is a tricyclic antidepressant and an opiate agonist.

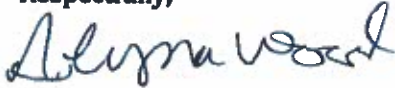
When I finally got myself to the emergency room for my abscesses and holes in my arms, my doctor informed me; I would be lucky to keep my left arm and possibly my right hand due to all the tissue damage. "T" is an acid! To get the opiate effects users seek, a lot of "T" is required. A simple Internet search reveals... *"Tianeptine tablets contain silica and do not dissolve completely. Often the solution is not filtered well thus particles in the injected fluid block capillaries, leading to thrombosis and then severe necrosis".*

I had surgery on both arms due to the abscesses and the infections. During my week-long hospitalization, I remember being terrified about all the open sores and cuts all over my body. I was also devastated that I had allowed my addiction to come to this. I have witnessed friends and peers in my community lose their lives, their morals, their families and their freedom to this substance.

Since "T" is undetectable with standard drug testing and it gives the opiate-like high, it has gained a lot of popularity with peers on probation, Michigan hope programs, parole and random drug testing participants.

I am convinced that "T" is the next epidemic. Other countries have banned this substance and it's sold on the internet here in the U.S. This must change.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alyssa Wood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alyssa Wood

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