

Testimony of  
**Ms. Carla Glowdoski**

August 20, 2004

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MEDICAL MALPRACTICE HEARING

BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

STATEMENT OF  
MS. CARLA GLODOWSKI

On July 5th 2002, my sixteen-month-old son, Christopher Karac Glodowski stuck his finger in my eldest daughter's bike chain. She was unaware that it was there, and the tip to the first joint was cut off. We rushed him to the hospital, and were told that he was a good candidate for replantation. We decided to have the medical team attempt reattachment.

Due to the lack of professionalism and inattentiveness of the doctors, my son was allowed to suffer a bronchial spasm to the point of severe oxygen deprivation. He went into cardiac arrest and had to be revived with chest compressions and finally epinephrine. After this occurred, the medical team chose not to tell me what had happened to my son. They did not give me the choice to end an elective surgery to explore why my healthy son was responding in this way. They continued with the surgery, and they took away my right as his parent.

Karac did not come out of the operation with the appropriate responses. He was unable to awaken, and could not breathe on his own. He had to be life-flighted to Primary Children's Medical Center. He was subjected to a battery of tests to determine why he was responding abnormally. Some of the tests included aids, blood tests for genetic disorders, MRI and an additional surgery for a muscle and skin biopsy.

The second MRT showed that he had suffered a severe anoxic brain injury. His body had gone too long without oxygen. He would never be normal again!

Later as experts were hired, and depositions were taken, we finally began to receive the truth about what happened to Karac. He has asthma, and has a more sensitive airway than someone who doesn't. When he was intubated he had a bronchial spasm. It was not treated right away with epinephrine. In fact, this medication was given last. He was allowed to cascade downward until he had a heart rate of twenty, and no blood pressure.

An independent hand-writing expert had to be hired to prove that Karac's charts were altered to look like he wasn't in distress as long as he was. The charting has two periods in which nothing was charted. Karac was dying, and the entire room of medical personnel was allowing it to

happen. The very people that swore under oath that patient safety was their primary concern denied having any responsibility.

I have not worked since this happened to my son. My employer was not supportive, and I was forced to quit my job. Due to the fact that I made a majority of our family's income, we began to suffer severe financial difficulties. On November tenth 2003, we settled our case out of court for an undisclosed amount. I did not want to settle, but due to our situation it was the only way to guarantee that Karac would get money to care for him for the rest of his life.

In settling with the other parties involved, we had to agree not to mention the names of medical personnel involved or the medical facility where it occurred. In essence, I feel we now have to protect them and their identities when they should have protected my innocent son instead. In protecting their names, I have learned from their co-workers that they still do not show remorse or acknowledge guilt. In fact they are stating that my son came into that hospital in the condition he is in now.

I would like to tell you more about my son Christopher Karac, and the incomprehensible effect this has had on my entire family. We call him either Bubba or Karac. My husband named Karac after Robert Plant's son. Robert Plant was a member of the rock group Led Zeppelin. His son died at the age of five of a mysterious virus. Robert Plant co-wrote the song "All of My Love" as a way to overcome his grief. This song has come to mean a lot to myself as well. Although my son is still alive, on July fifth 2002 the medical personnel that operated on my son killed the boy he was supposed to grow up to be and left a hurt and damaged shell.

Prior to July fifth, Karac was full of energy. He loved to play catch, interacting with his sisters, and eating. He was quick to laugh and smile and was full of life. Now he is quadriplegic, and suffers from cortical blindness. He cannot eat normally and must receive his nutrition through a tube in his stomach. He has a baclofen pump implanted under his skin with a catheter threaded into his spinal cord. This mechanism delivers a constant supply of medication to his body to help control muscle contractions. He also suffers from high blood pressure, reflux, irritability and difficulty sleeping. The quality of Karac's life has been horribly altered. He has been committed to a life of pain and frustration. A few of the things not taken from him are his smile, laugh, his love for his family, and music. Ironically, his favorite music is Led Zeppelin.

This has also had an acute effect on my daughters. My oldest daughter, Kielee, still displays problems with guilt. She wants to know when Karac's finger is going to grow back. She wants to know when he is going to get better and walk and talk. She has moments when she will become thoughtful. When I ask her what is wrong, she'll cry and tell me she will never hurt Bubba again. She is unable to separate the accident with the bike and the monstrosity that actually happened at the hospital. They are linked together in her mind.

Kiera is five, and she is just learning to read. She was eating a piece of Laffy Taffy in the car, and she read me the joke: "What has two legs, but can't walk?" I thought about it for a moment, but did not come up with an answer. Kiera came up with her own answer and said "Bubba." I started to cry and could not drive through my tears. I do not know what the true answer was, but her answer is forever burned into my mind.

My husband has lost his namesake and his baseball partner. He has quietly dealt with what has happened to Bubba. He has been forced to continue to work in a dead-end job because we have to keep medical insurance. When he does break down, he tells me that he let Bubba down. He was supposed to protect him and not let anything bad happen to him.

As for myself, I despise the person who coined the cliché "time heals all wounds." I know that I will not live long enough to heal. To this day, I still cannot talk about what happened to Bubba without breaking down. The day that Bubba's finger was cut off I was trimming the rose bushes around our house. I remember thinking that the shears were sharp, and I needed to put them away properly so that the kids wouldn't cut themselves. At that point I heard Chris yelling. I believe God was trying to tell me something was going to happen, but I didn't listen.

We recently found out we are going to have a new little boy in September. This should have been an extremely happy time for all of us, but I couldn't help crying. I kept wondering if this was a way to replace Bubba, and somehow get raising him right this time. It is so hard to be happy when I'm worried all the time. I am worried about dying before Karac, having my son die before myself, and being physically unfit to care for him. I stress about the girls being emotionally scarred. I am concerned about not spending enough time with the girls. I do not want them to resent Bubba. It also saddens me to know that every Saturday our family time includes everyone, but Bubba. He is left home with a nurse. Our family has been destroyed.

The money we received in this settlement has done nothing to help put our family back together, but it has taken away the financial burden. I have been able to purchase additional therapy equipment, receive additional therapies, and it will help ensure that Karac will have the best quality of life possible.

I cannot fathom the thought of anyone thinking that putting a cap on the amount awarded to families who have been victimized by malpractice will solve anything. In my eyes it is an attempt to victimize the innocent even further. My son's life did not come with any dollar signs attached. Although he wasn't important to those who operated on him on July fifth, he is important to me, and cannot be replaced.

Damage caps only hurt the people who are the most injured. Our claim was not frivolous or a "junk" lawsuit. The only "junk" in this case was the quality of the medical care Karac received. I want those of you who are voting on this topic to consider how you would vote if this was your son. Should you protect innocent babies like Karac, or doctors that lie and alter records? My son had to undergo many additional tests and surgeries because of their deceit. I would give anything to have my son back. In my eyes the doctors are replaceable. Don't let this happen to your family before you make the correct decision--make it now. Doctors already have more protections than anyone else. Protect families! Reform insurance companies, and hold bad doctors accountable. Do not continue to victimize those who have already lost so much. Make the right and only decision!