

# Gov. Rauner signs Charlie's Law

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LOMBARD– Gov. Bruce Rauner today signed Charlie’s Law, a-first-in-the-nation bill that enables all children in Illinois to receive treatment under their insurance plans for the debilitating behavioral disease PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections).

“Today is an important day. This shows what can happen when we come together promptly and effectively to put our children first,” said Gov. Rauner. “Our young people should be the top priority in everything that we do in the state of Illinois. Our children,

their health, well-being and education should be first and foremost in everything that we do in public service and in government.”

Just one round of treatment for PANDAS can cost up to \$15,000. The bipartisan HB 2721, now known as Charlie’s Law, requires all insurance providers to cover the treatment and ensures parents will never have to choose between affordable care and the well-being of their children.

Gov. Rauner was joined by Wendy Nawara and Kate Drury, the President and Vice President respectively of PANDAS/PANS Advocacy and Support; both women have sons named Charlie who suffered from PANDAS. Drury fought tirelessly for Charlie’s Law after her son was diagnosed with PANDAS and developed a deathly fear of water as a result of the disease. Since receiving treatment for PANDAS, Charlie has recovered and is thriving four years after his diagnosis.

“I would like to thank Governor Rauner and the legislators who have stood by us for the last couple of years to fight something that we thought was insurmountable,” said Wendy Nawara. “We are so grateful that you are here and that kids in Illinois will have access to coverage for PANDAS.”

State Sen. Tom Cullerton (D-Villa Park), State Sen. Chris Nybo (R-Elmhurst), State Rep. Deb Conroy (D-Villa Park) and State Rep. Peter Breen (R-Lombard) were also present for the signing, representing the bipartisan coalition that passed Charlie’s Law.

“It was the privilege of my career to be a small part of Team Charlie. Kate, Wendy and Charlie and Charlie are the reason that we are here today,” said State Rep. Deb Conroy (Villa Park). “Their fight is why we are here, and I am so grateful that we will now be able to offer the coverage that these families need in the state of Illinois. It is my hope that this will continue in the other 49 states.”