

## DYLAN BROWN

Shared with House Appropriations Committee on April 9, 2013

My name is Ken Brown. My wife, Lynn and I live in Calhoun, Louisiana. Together, we have four children — ranging from ages 12 to 26. I would like to ask you to please include funding for 200 additional NOW slots in the budget. Our son, Dylan, is one of the 10,000 people on the waiting list.

In December of 2010, Dylan and his best friend went duck hunting and he was accidentally shot in the back of the head. In the blink of an eye, Dylan went from being a very active 19 year-old with a well-paying job, to requiring constant care. This devastated our family and radically changed our lives.

There were no pellets that penetrated his skull, but instead it crushed his skull causing a venus sinus stroke. This paralyzed his right side, affected his temporary memory and due to a surgery to relieve pressure on his brain, caused him to lose his eyesight. Dylan can see light and shadows, but has no memory of what I look like. At one point, we had no idea if he was going to live. After being at two hospitals, he was transferred to a facility in Tyler, where he had little to no contact with family and began to regress. It was only when he was brought home to me and put in a loving, stable environment with family that love him, that we saw progress in his recovery.

Dylan would not want you to feel sorry for him. We love him and are glad to have him in our home and he has a good attitude. We laugh until we cry and have a better relationship than we ever have. See, Dylan's mind is still fully functioning...he makes us laugh even in the darkest of days or when we are in the worst mood...Dylan has not lost hope for a full recovery and neither have we. Hope is what drives us as parents to do the absolute best for him; however, the toll that 24 hour care has taken on my wife and I is difficult. To get help to care for him is almost impossible.

We have two other young children in the home with us and because of lack of resources, it makes it difficult to run simple errands, go to ball games, or even go out on dates. My wife and I are the only ones that transport Dylan to therapy or anywhere else and my wife's job revolves around Dylan's schedule. Because of the nature of my job and insurance, it is very difficult for me to take off work, and my wife can't quit her job. We do receive some limited respite hours through the Individual and Family Support Program; however, this does not cover all the needs that Dylan has.

Dylan has been on the NOW waiting list since December 2011. The NOW would allow us to have the dependable consistent care that Dylan needs and would free us up to do day to day tasks necessary for normal functioning of our home. We cannot hire someone every day to help care for Dylan and the thought of institutionalization concerns me. Dylan functions best when surrounded by parents and siblings that love him and want what is best for him.

So, today, I ask again to please include funding for the 200 additional NOW slots in the budget. So that families, like ours, can benefit from the services provided that are so desperately needed to stay together. Thank you.

