

02/26/2015

Dear Honorable Nikki R. Haley,

I am writing you in regards to my son Cayden Johnson, who is 5 years old. At 11 weeks of age, he was abused by his father, Gregory Johnson. Cayden had 17 previous fracture ribs in various healing stages from 2 weeks of age up to 11 weeks of age. He had skull fracture, with bleeding on the brain. Cayden also had bleeding behind his eyes. Due to the trauma Cayden experienced by his father, it has left Cayden with long term damage. Cayden isn't able to sit up or stand without assistance. He has developmental delays. He doesn't speak like a normal 5 year old. Cayden has to take physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy for the rest of his life. He will face many struggles and problems. At 11 weeks, Cayden was taken into DSS custody. He was put into Laurens County Department of Social Services custody. The whole time he was in custody I attended every visit, traveling to Spartanburg to see Cayden. My visits began at Greenville Children's Hospital, while Cayden was still in the hospital and then switched to Spartanburg for his visits. Cayden was placed in a foster home in Spartanburg, so I traveled to Spartanburg to see him. In 2009 to 2011, I was only able to see Cayden at the visits. Finally in 2011, I was given a treatment plan, which consisted of going to all the doctor visits, therapies, attending parenting classes, and attending my visits. I went to every appointment, including my visits, and I went to every parenting class. I also took first aid classes and CPR classes. I did a lot of research through my spare time while Cayden was in custody. I did everything I possibly could to show that I was dedicated to Cayden. I even had a specialist review Cayden's medical records to see if there were any bone diseases or anything else that I might need to know. The specialist ruled out everything and said it was 100% child abuse. So therefore, Cayden's father was GUILTY! Then in May 2012, I was given custody of my son. Cayden and I were reunited. It was so perfect, to finally have my son home after a long hard battle. I finally proved myself innocent and was given custody of my son. It was the best day of my life. As a single mother, I knew it was going to be hard, especially to be a mother of a special needs child. I was 24 years old and was ready for the responsibility of this child. When Cayden returned to my custody he was 3 years old. He was depending on 5 G-tube feedings a day. He wasn't able to take anything by mouth, he didn't know what it was like to eat or drink by mouth. He wouldn't allow you to even brush his teeth. He wouldn't play with any toys or anything. He would just sit there. He would roll on the floor but that would be it. Cayden was a baby. Cayden couldn't bend his legs, his legs remained straight at all times. He was very stiff with very little movement in arms. You couldn't change Cayden like a normal baby. His legs wouldn't move or spread for the diaper to be put on. I knew in my heart that I wanted Cayden to be independent, I wanted to teach him anything and everything to make him better. So everyday I worked with Cayden. I would slowly work with getting him to take foods and drinks by mouth. I bought special stuff to thicken his drinks and I got this special food blender to puree his food. Because Cayden wasn't able to chew. I got a special cup for him to learn to drink out of. I got special toys

that would attract his attention to make him want to play. Eventually, Cayden learned how to stack blocks, sort blocks, take shapes in and out, he can identify shapes, and he can flip pages in a book. Cayden can also identify his colors. He can count to 3 using fist bumps. Cayden got to where he would stand in a stander and play while standing. He loved to stand and watch his favorite tv shows. I took Cayden everywhere i went, If you seen me you seen Cayden. He is my shadow, my everything my world. Cayden started school in the fall of 2012, which was very hard for him bc of the bond and attactionment we have. I would take him to school in the mornings for 2 hours, and then to therapy or to a doctory appt that afternoon. Cayden was going to therapy twice a week at Better Beginnings, Spartanburg, SC. All his doctor appts were in Greenville or Spartanburg. So we traveled every week from Clinton, SC to these appts. While Cayden wasnt at school, therapy, or doctor appt. I did everything i possibly can to teach Cayden everything he needed to know. I would take Cayden swimming, to the park to slide or swing, he played in the floors with his cousins, we worked on standing/walking, we tried a bunch of different foods and drinks, and etc. Anything that Cayden wanted to do I let him try. I never wanted Cayden to see he was different and he couldnt do anything. I wanted him to know that he was able to do anything he put his mind too. I treated Cayden has if he was 3 years old not a baby. I eventually got the 5 tube feedings a day dropped down to 3 tube feedings. He had a swallow study done, showing that he was able to start on finely chopped foods, and could take liquids thicken with no problem. So we worked on that til his motor skills got better, to where he didnt need the thicke-it anymore. We went to routine nutritionist appts and she was promoting Cayden to eat nothing but table foods and to drink by mouth. So we worked on it til, Cayden was able to drop down to 2 tube feedings a day. He is now eating by mouth fine chopped foods and drinking drinks out of a straw, no sippy cup. In May 2013, Cayden had botox injections done and foot surgery to rebuild his foot formation. Cayden was in a full cast on both legs from feet up to hips for 6 weeks. Then every week for 6 weeks we had to go back in forth to Shriners Hospital in Greenville for casting, so they could adjust his legs to bend them more each week. The Shriners Hospital told me how to care for Cayden in the cast, and eventually allowed him to start standing again. So they showed me how to do range of motion and how importnat it was to do it 3 times a day. If i could do range of motion more then to do it. So everyday I was working on the range of motion, trying to get Cayden back standing, and working on anything else that day. Cayden eventually learned that he could bend his on legs when he is relaxed. So he realized he had control over his legs, he could move them and that they werent just there. Then Cayden progressed to moving his toes, when asked Cayden would move his toes. He will also lift his legs up bout 2 inches when asked too. Cayden then learned that with assistant he could try and pull his pants up. He tried to brush his own hair. I even started letting him choose what shirt he wanted to wear to school. I would hold up 2 shirts and let him decide. Everyday I seen changes in Cayden to where he was being more independant, and turning more and more into a little boy. He wasnt this baby i brought home. He was a handsome little boy. So Cayden went to school, he was in a special needs class, he was attending therapy every week and his doctor appts. He was away from me a total of 3-4 hours in the whole day. The rest of the time he was with me. He never left my side. I was a full time mommy teaching my son everything he needed to know. We did everything together. We would go down inflatable slides, inflatable bounce houses, anything and everything would could possibly do, we done it. In

July 2013 I met a guy down at the beach, while on vacation. I had taken Cayden to the beach for vacation. I met Sherif Alkassar, things progressed. He quickly stepped up to be a father to Cayden. Cayden even called him daddy. I begin to teach Sherif the range of motion, and how to care for Cayden. He caught on quick and he wanted the same that i wanted for Cayden. We wanted to see Cayden succeed. We wanted the very best. In December 2013, Cayden was at physical therapy, while the therapist was doing range of motion, Cayden got a tibia fracture. He was in cast on his right leg til January 2014. In January 2014 i decided to move down to the beach and explore new things. The whole time while having my handicapped son. I took him everywhere and included him in everything. Never once left him behind. I enrolled him into school in Myrtle Beach Primary and enrolled him in therapy at Next Step Pediatric Therapy in Myrtle Beach. Cayden recieved therapy at school and at Next Step. I would travle back n forth to Greenville for his doctor appts at the Shriners Hospital. In April 2014 I was getting Cayden ready to get a bath. I took his AFO (ankle/foot brace) off and seen his ankle was swollen. I took him to Grand Strand Regional Hospital. They did xray, ultrasound for blood clots, and blood work. They couldnt find anything wrong with him. They said to follow up with his orthopedic if didnt get better. Well the swollen went down and things got better. I called the shriners the next day but it was almost 2 weeks before they could see him. In the meantime things were better and Cayden was his normal self. Cayden never showed any signs of pain or hurting. Cayden is always a happy and cheerful little boy, who is always smiling. Towards the end of April, I decided to move us back to Clinton, SC. Sherif Alkassar had opened a resturant in Clinton, so me and Cayden moved back to help at the resturant. While in Clinton, i enrolled Cayden back into school there and begin to get his therapies started back up at Better Beginnings. Towards the end of May, we went back to the beach for a weekend. Sherif was getting Cayden ready for a bath, bc Cayden gets a bath every night before bed. I went down stairs to get our laundry out of dryer. Before leaving I asked Sherif if he would be okay and if needed my help and he stated he would be okay. So while im downstairs getting laundry, he calls for me to get to the room. I get up there and he is saying we have to go now he heard a pop. He was putting Cayden clothes on and his leg popped. We got to Grand strand Regional hospital and they informed us that Cayden femur bone was broken. Also on the xray it showed that Cayden had developed osteopenia, which is a brittle bone diease. The next day we was discharged and doctor sent us to Shriners Hospital. I got to shriners hopsital with Cayden, they did a full xray and put him in a spica cast. Later that day, they begin to tell me Cayden had multiple fractures in his legs and his collar bone had a hair line fracture. They said they were multiple fractures in various healing stages. I had no clue that Cayden had any broken bones. The ones i knew was the tibia that happened in therapy and then the femur bone. Cayden never showed sigsn or brusing that he was in pain. He was always happy go lucky, always wanting to go get a hamburger from Mcdonalds and go to Walmart. He loved riding in the buggy at walmart. Cayden was always playing and acting his normal self. The cheerful and happy little boy. Shriners Hospital reported me to Laurens County Dss on May 23, 2014. They came in and spoke with me and examined Cayden. We were sent over to Greenville Childrens Hospital thru Memorial Weekend. That following Wednesday, I was given a saftety plan and was able to leave with Cayden. So me and Cayden went back to Myrtle Beach, bc we had finally decided to stay in Myrtle Beach for good. Cayden had doctor appts June 5, 6, 9, i called to rescduled them

for June 12 to have them on the same day. So i took Cayden to see the Shriners Hospital and to the Endocrinologist in Greenville at PateWood to see Doctor Nelson. Doctor Nelson requested to have a bone density test done to look further into this bone disease that showed up on the xray. My safety plan thru dss stated to cooperate with Dss, Doctors, and law enforcement. I was 2 weeks without a phone but DSS knew where i was and called the motel office number that Sherif Alkassar owned. I recieved the message and called them the next day when i went and bought a phone. They requested me to bring Cayden to the office, i stated that i couldnt just up and come with him bc of his needs that i needed more then a day to plan it. So they told me to have him there on Friday, June 27, 2014. So i agreed to it. I traveled with Cayden back to Clinton to meet at the Laurens County DSS office. They advised me to take Cayden to Piedmont Pediatrics to see a doctor, so I took him. Then they advised me to go back to the office to talk with them. That is when they stated that they was going to take temporary custody of Cayden. They took him from me June 27, 2014. On July 1, 2014 i had my 72 hour hearing to discuss the case and why they took him. They took him bc they said i failed to keep in touch with them and bc i changed Cayden doc appt with out notifying them. As the case progressed we had family meetings to try and reunite Cayden with me. Dss refused to offer me any treatment plan. They kept saying they want to Terminate my Parental Rights. At the 72 hour hearing, i was told i could attend the doctor appts for Cayden and I could make phone calls to Cayden. Cayden and I have such a very strong bond, it best that i make the phone calls to him and see him. My case was then given a case worker, which she truly dislikes me. Andrienne Jones is the case worker. She doesnt associate with me. At my visits with Cayden she doesnt even talk to me or ask me anything that protains to Cayden. She doesnt greet me when I show or anything. She will not even return my phone calls. She emails me so she doesnt have to be on the phone with me. She stated that she didnt want me to Call Cayden and that i could not attend the doctor appts anymore. She stated if I showed up then, i could get in trouble. So for 2 months I only went to my visits with Cayden. I traveled from Myrtle Beach to Simpsonville, SC to see Cayden twice a month. On October 30, I got to attend a doctor appt at the Shriners Hospital and i was suppose to have a visit afterwards, Andrienne Jones didnt show up. So the foster mom supervised my visit. Then in January 2015 I was able to attend doctor appt for Cayden feeding tube to have it switched out bc he is at 2 feedings a day. Everyday even though i was advised not to speak with Cayden, I call him every night between 8pm and 9pm to speak with him. Sometimes i speak to him 2-3 times a day...depends on what they are doing. Cayden will ask the foster mom to call me. He will tell them he wants his momma. He tells me that he misses me and he loves me. it isnt very clear but you can make out what he is trying to say. He has caught on that when i say bye means he his hanging up, he has caught on to blowing me kisses at the end means hanging up and now when i say go get ur bath baby, he knows he has to say to goodbye to me. The foster mom has stated that Cayden will throw fits and tantrums wanting me and doesnt wanna hang up on the phone. He has learned that when he passes Mconalds in Simpsonville that is where he sees me. He always wants to go there bc he thinks that is where im at. It is very hard to hear my son ask for me tell me he wants me and hear him cry knowing i cant do anything about it. My son was never abused. He is loved by me and my family very much. He is my everything my world. I would do anything for him. The bond we have is so close, it is hurting me and him extremely being apart like this. On February 23,2015 I had a merits hearing. It

lasted two days. The Judge Joe McGowan decided 60 days to issue discovery and then 30 days Terminate My Parental Rights. I did not think this is a fair hearing. My son was never abused. How can they say he was abused when he has a brittle bone disease that runs thru my family. My Great Grandma, Grandma, my Aunt, and now Cayden has it. How can you say he was abuse when he has a bone disease that could of caused it. I did everyrthing i was suppose to and more as a mother for Cayden. I did everything the doctors asked me to do. When they said stand him i made sure he would stand, when they told me not to be standing him i didnt. They kept saying how important range of motion was. The fractures they saying Cayden has is in his legs, where he was getting range of motion and he was standing. Cayden recieved a tibia fracture due to range of motion in therapy. If a therapist can break his bones and not know it, then how do you know this bone disease isnt the cause of his fractures. Caydens xrays were sent over to a forensic doctor. She stated that should couldnt diagnosis it as child abuse, that the fractures arent the ones done intentionally. They were minor fractures, which i know any fracture is very important in kids. Everytime i expected something to be wrong with Cayden i took him to the emergency room or the doctor. I never let anything slide, I was always very cautious, when came to Cayden. I dont think the ruling is very fair to TPR. Cayden and I belong together. We dont deserve to be apart and seperated. Cayden needs to be with me or atleast my family, where he is loved and care for dearly. Cayden is very special to me and means the world to me. I taught Cayden everything he knows. Cayden is now 5 years old and Dss wants him taken away for good. Yet, they see how much he has progressed with me and see how close of a bond iam. They even stated I was a very good mom to Cayden. Now at age 5, Cayden can say atleast 25 words, all his colors, he can work a phone or ipad, he is able to stand and sit with assistant, tries to make sentances, he can tell you what he wants, he can play with toys, and etc. He still has his struggles of everyday life, which he will always have due to be abuse by his father at 11 weeks, Gregory Johnson. I'm asking for your help to help me to be able to be reunited with my son. To help bring him home where he belongs. I can send you pictures and videos to show before and now. I am willing to do whatever it takes to get my son back home. Im not quitting and not backing down. There is no way that the bones could of broken intentionally in my care. I knew nothing bout it, and learned recently that he had this brittle bone disease. Now that I know he has this disease, i have done researched to learn how to better care for Cayden. There arent any classes offered to help teach parents, so Iam doing this on my own. I am very good mother to Cayden. There is people in the community that knows how good of a Mom Iam with Cayden, not just friends and family. How can my rights be terminated for something I didnt do, but yet Cayden, biological father abused Cayden and still has rights to Cayden, with no charges. I am writing you for help in this matter. I cant let DSS take my son for something that wasnt done intentionally. I love him and care about him to much to let this just slide. I cant stand the thought of being away from my son for good. So I am writing you for help to help me be reunited with my Son, that i love dearly!

Thank You,

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Osteopenia is where a child has low bone mineral density. Individuals may have brittle or low density bones. Osteopenia occurs over time, where a child doesn't use the muscles/bones in every day use. Osteopenia doesn't occur overnight it takes time for it to develop. A lot of special needs kids have Osteopenia. There is no pain or difficulty playing or engaging in normal children's activities. There is no general sign or symptoms of osteopenia in children until a bone breaks or fractures. Osteopenia can also occur due to lack of vitamins and minerals.

Botox injections are used in children to loosen stiffen muscles. A long term side effect is weaken of muscles. Botox injections can affect all the muscles in the body but mainly the ones where the injections were done.

There is a lot of brittle bone diseases that are misdiagnosed, a lot of parents of special needs children are being charged for something they didn't do, due to the fact their child has a brittle bone disease. There needs to be further research and testing done to prove the innocents of these parents.

Vitamin Deficiencies in special needs children. Pediasure that Cayden was given was 40% of his vitamins. Then I started feeding him regular food and maybe Cayden wasn't getting the vitamins he needed along with his medicine. His body might not be absorbing enough. Plus with the brittle bones disease and then he was given botox shots which weaken his muscles. All of this could of weaken his bones to where they break easily.

There are a lot of different types of brittle bones diseases. That are caused by lack of vitamins, lack of use of muscles/bones, and etc. Can you please help me to be able to have my son tested for more information to find out what is going on to help prove my innocents. I love my son and care about him dearly. I would do anything in this world for my son. I want the very best for Cayden and the very best for him is us being together. I am willing to do anything and everything to get my son back home. I will not back down til I am given my son back. Bc TPR is not the answer to all this. There is something more wrong with Cayden and I want to get to the bottom of it to prove that I didn't hurt my son intentionally!