

**STATEMENT
OF
FRANCINE HAHN HAIGHT
Before The
U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations
Hearing On
*BUYER BEWARE: THE DANGER OF PURCHASING
PHARMACEUTICALS OVER THE INTERNET*
June 17, 2004**

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Good Morning.

My name is Francine Hahn Haight. My daughter, Natalie and my son Jeremy are present and sitting behind me. I am very grateful for this opportunity to speak before this Subcommittee and to share what has happened to our family. I am the Mother of 3 beautiful children. I am extremely sorry to say that one of them died.

I am here to tell you about my son, Ryan Thomas Haight. Ryan was born on December 28, 1982, and died on February 12, 2001. Ryan died of an overdose of narcotics he had easily purchased on the Internet. A medical doctor, Dr. Robert Ogle, that he never saw prescribed them to him over the Internet. An Internet pharmacy, Clayton Fuchs of Mainstreet Pharmacy, mailed them to our home. He was only 17 when he purchased the narcotics, and he was only 18 when he died.

Ryan was an incredible boy. From the time he was little, I always believed that he would make a difference in this world. He was very intelligent and excelled in school. He loved math and science. He was always at the top of his class, was a Gate student in the elementary years, and then went on to take honors classes. He was an A student maintaining a 4.0 or above during his years in high school. He was looking forward to going to college. He loved his family and we did many things together. He had traveled quite a bit, loved Hawaii and the Caribbean. Ryan loved to hike, see the National Parks, and always looked forward to holidays and gatherings of the family. He was athletic. In Elementary school he played Little League Baseball, starting with T-ball and ending to be a top player in the Majors and making the All Star Team. He also started playing Open Junior tennis tournaments, and went on to play Varsity tennis for 3 years in high school. Had he not died his senior year, he would have been a 4 year Varsity Letterman in tennis. He loved to snow ski, snow board, water ski, knee board, and attempted all sports with great enthusiasm. He loved to play billiards, go bowling, and play Ping-Pong. He was competitive, and competed on a swim team when he was young, and loved to play Nintendo and other video games. Ryan loved using the computer. He used the computer to play games against his friends, to compete in Fantasy Baseball where you pick your teams, and he loved to chat with his friends on line. He loved to trade baseball cards on Ebay. Ryan was taking a computer graphics class in high school. He was considering a possible career designing software or doing

something with computers. But all his hopes and dreams died when he discovered he could buy drugs on the Internet. He was curious about the party scene, went to Rave parties with friends, and started to experiment with drugs. He was encouraged to experiment with drugs from an Internet chat room. Someone in this chat room told him where you could buy drugs and how to buy them on the Internet. He found that you could buy powerful narcotics on the Internet, very easily, right out of his own house. It was like buying candy in a grocery store.

On February 11, 2001, Ryan had worked a full day at a retail store. He came home around 8pm and said he was hungry. I had made him his favorite chicken soup in the crock pot. He told me his back was bothering him from moving plants in the nursery at work. Since it was cold and raining outside, rather than use the outside spa, he asked if he could use mine. He used my bath around 10 PM for about 30 minutes, got out and after talking to him for a few minutes about work he said he would like to just relax in his sister's room and play video games. His sister, Natalie, was away at college, he missed her, and felt comfortable using her room for the television and video games. About an hour later, just after Midnight, I went to say goodnight to him in his room. He was just getting into bed and said he was going to listen to some music. Ryan loved all kinds of music, Rap, techno, and we shared a common interest and love for classic rock. I loved it that he enjoyed listening to the Eagles and the Beatles with me. I told him I loved him as I do every night, hugged him and he said...."love you too."

The next morning, was a holiday, President's Day, so it was not unusual for Ryan to sleep in. I had 12 women showing up that evening for dinner and to play Bunco, so I had many things to do to get ready. My housekeeper, who had lived in with us for many years, came to the house that morning to clean. I told her I was going to a few stores to get things for that night, and that Ryan was sleeping, but should get up soon and to call me if she or he needed anything. I got home after 3pm and noticed Ryan's car still in the driveway. It had not moved and I immediately felt something was wrong. I ran into his room, and found that Ryan was not breathing. I could not believe what I saw. I knew he was dead. I call 911, and tried to do CPR. I screamed and cried....and screamed and cried...and prayed for him to come back to life. I remember a paramedic pulling me off him...and looking me into my eyes and saying.....OH MY GOD, I am So Sorry. There is nothing we can do.

I thought, HOW, HOW, HOW could this happen? What happened? The next thing I know, a sheriff is showing me a bottle. A bottle of Hydrocodone, Vicodin. On the bottle it says Mainstreet Pharmacy. He also shows me a bottle of Morphine. I thought, no way.....these are controlled prescription drugs. He said he found the drugs after searching his room. These are drugs under lock and key in hospitals. How did he get them? How?

We parents often worry about our children. When they are little we worry they will fall and get hurt. But as they become teenagers we worry even more. We worry that they will drink alcohol and drive and get in a car accident. We worry that they will smoke cigarettes and marijuana. We worry that they will try illegal street drugs, such as cocaine, LSD, heroin and

others. We worry about porn, and strangers they might meet on the Internet. But never, did I worry about buying prescription drugs on the Internet.

After Ryan died, a friend of Ryan's called and told his father he got the drugs off the Internet. Never did I think you could so easily get prescription drugs on the Internet. I was in shock. Being an RN, I always thought that controlled substances were under lock and key. Ryan was encouraged to obtain powerful narcotics that required nothing but filling out a simple questionnaire on the Internet. That week, Ryan's dad gave Ryan's computer to the DEA and the investigation started. I have assisted in helping with the prosecution of these Internet drug dealers. They are just as bad, if not worse, than the drug dealers on the street. Since then, from the evidence they got from the Internet, Clayton Fuchs and Dr. Robert Ogle were found guilty and pleaded guilty of selling drugs illegally on the Internet. An autopsy report shows that Ryan died from a drug overdose of Hydrocodone, Vicodin which was prescribed by Dr. Ogle and sent to him from Mainstreet Pharmacy. Why did they sell these drugs to my son? They both said they "did it for the money." Dr. Ogle had been to prison twice. Once he served three years in a federal penitentiary for illegally prescribing Quaaludes, a hypnotic sedative. Another time for theft. But he still easily got his medical license back. He should never get his medical license again. I think Ryan, as most kids would, thought that since a doctor was prescribing the drug, it is a legal drug obtained with a prescription, then it must be safe. The drug was delivered to our home, with no instructions, no safety precautions, no adverse reactions attached. Ryan received these drugs without ever seeing the doctor, and never had any follow up. The pharmacy delivered these "controlled substances with no instructions and no questions asked."

These money hungry, drug pushers of doctors and pharmacies have got to be stopped. They are making millions of dollars and are only concerned about the money.....they do not care about the person ordering them.

There are over 500 rogue pharmacies on the Internet as I speak. Tighter regulations on our Internet need to be enforced with high penalties. I continue to receive emails from these pharmacies on a daily basis. What our public do not know...is just because it says, United States pharmacy does not mean it is in the U.S. In fact, when you click on the site, it goes to Mexico. Our seniors think they can buy from Canadian pharmacies and save money. What they do not know, is that when they click on something that says Canada, it actually takes them to Africa or India. Drugs are being distributed daily like candy, and it's very dangerous. These Internet sites can lead to an increase in drug addiction, and lead to more deaths.

RyansCause is an organization I have started. Reaching Youths Abusing Narcotics. Saying No to Drugs is not enough. We are losing this war against drugs. President Bush in his State of the Union Address a few months back, mentioned that drug use in our youth is down. He might be right about street drugs, but he did not mention the increased usage of prescription drugs. Prescription drug usage is up. My hope is that with tighter restrictions on the Internet and more public awareness we could save lives. I want to get RyansCause brochures into every high school classroom. I want to talk and educate our youth and parents. This tragic death could have

happened to anyone. Ryan was the boy next door. We need to fight this war against drugs and save others.

With tighter regulations on the sales of prescription drugs on the Internet, it will make our increasingly technological world more safe. I want to thank Senator Feinstein and Senator Coleman in introducing legislation to improve the safety of buying prescription drugs on the Internet. Internet pharmacies should be required to identify their business, pharmacist and physicians. Pharmacies should be prohibited from distributing drugs to consumers with a prescription based solely on an online questionnaire. The state Attorney's General should have the ability to shut down rogue websites, nationwide, rather than just in their individual jurisdictions. Severe punishment should be served to those that break this law. These laws will not bring Ryan back. Our grief continues and extends beyond the immediate family. Ryan's grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and friends feel Ryan's death very deeply. Ryan will never see Jeremy play his clarinet, or take him out for ice cream. Ryan will never be here to talk for long hours with his best friend, his sister Natalie. I will not see him graduate from college, attend his wedding, and be grandmother to his children. But we continue to water our white roses, and drink our Sprite with no ice in his memory. Ryan will be forever missed and will remain in our hearts forever. Thank you for allowing me to tell his story in front of this Subcommittee.

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