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03/19/2001

The Honorable Nathan Deal, Congressman
200 Main Street, SW
Gainesville, GA 30051

Dear Congressman Deal:

I am a psychologist in private practice in your home area of Gainesville, Georgia. I am writing on behalf of my patient, Brenda Compton, as well as many others who are in the same predicament.

When Brenda first presented herself for my services, she was extremely anxious and extremely thin. The source of her anxiety, as I discovered, was primarily due to unrelenting diarrhea, which could present itself at any time and virtually any place. This relegated Brenda to staying at home primarily, for fear that her condition would present itself in the car or in other public places where a restroom was not immediately available. In addition, the diarrhea became a life-threatening condition, as she lost much in the way of fluids and nutrients, secondary to this condition. Almost nothing seemed to work with her and she continued to lose weight during the early part of my time with her.

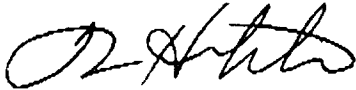
As time progressed, she was prescribed the medication Lotronex by her treating physician, Doctor Brenda Kowalske. The results were extremely positive for her, both physically and emotionally. The medication was quite effective in reversing the effect of what was apparently Irritable Bowel Syndrome, a currently incurable gastrointestinal disease which affects about 20 percent of the population. Brenda was now free from fecal incontinence and repeated embarrassment, allowing her to pursue normal activities. She became much more lively and assertive, and much of her anxiety began to decrease considerably. Although she remains under my care at the present time, her appointments had decreased considerably and I began to see her approximately every 3-4 weeks rather than weekly.

Unfortunately, her medication has been withdrawn from the market, as of November 2000. A small number of deaths had been associated with the use of this medication. It is my understanding that the medication was inappropriately prescribed in the cases that have resulted in death. Unfortunately, the producer of this medication, GlaxoWellcome, Inc. and the Food and Drug Administration have been unable to reach any type of agreement as to the re-issue of this medication. Persons such as Brenda are now relegated to the same fears and anxieties as was the case prior to the prescription of this medication. At present, no other such medication is available within the United States. It is my understanding that Lotronex and possibly similar medications are available in other countries.

I have been made aware of the Lotronex Action Group, which is oriented toward action in this unfortunate situation. This group has urged a Congressional Inquiry into the situation, as well as requesting that the medication be made available to those people who have been currently taking it until differences between Glaxo and the FDA are resolved.

As a psychologist, I have seen the emotional difference that administration of this medication has made, along with the fears and anxieties that occur when this promising medication has been removed from those who were prospering with this. As a constituent from your district, I would urge you to become active on this matter, lending your support to the speedy resolution of this issue and also to any Congressional Inquiry that might be forthcoming. Please give this matter all possible consideration, as I believe that this problem can be solved with more effort.

Sincerely,



Thomas H. White, Ph.D.

CC: Patient's file
Brenda F. Compton