



Dear Women of Influence Consideration Team,

Helping those who have no voice is part of what drives my friend Janet, most notably at the Iowa statehouse, under the beautiful golden dome where her mother once worked. People know Janet's work helping vulnerable Iowa children. They know the landmark legislation she helped push through to rid Iowa buildings of cancer-causing smoke. But I would argue it's not only her work that happens inside the most powerful building in our state that has had the greatest impact. It's the plans she makes in metro coffee shops and the Board meetings she hosts at her Beaverdale kitchen table that have created her greatest legacy, and one that makes her a significant woman of influence.

When Grace Elizabeth Pattinson was born still on July 22, 2003, her mother's life changed forever. At the time, Grace's mom was a successful, well-liked lawmaker a few months in to her second term in the Iowa House, making a difference for Iowans every day. The loss of Grace was devastating. Janet's second child had a full head of hair, was 19 inches long and looked a lot like her big brother Charlie. Grace died of a true knot in her umbilical cord five weeks before her due date. Janet and her husband Brian had to say goodbye before they could even say hello.

Over the following months, Janet would meet four metro women who also lost baby daughters. The women learned that a baby is stillborn every 22 minutes in the US. They learned parents are ten times more likely to lose their child to stillbirth than they are to SIDS. They would also learn that few people talk about stillbirth, and very little funding is given to find out what causes it. Janet again felt the powerful pull of wanting to help those who have no voice.

She and her four friends: Kate, Kerry, Tiffan and Jan, created a non-profit organization called Healthy Birth Day. And then they created a public awareness campaign called Count the Kicks, which teaches expectant parents the importance of, and method for, tracking their baby's movement in the third trimester. It's a campaign so successful, Iowa's stillbirth ranking has gone from 35th to third lowest in just eight years. Since Count the Kicks began, Iowa's stillbirth rate dropped 26 percent. They wanted to save just one baby. Today they're saving babies all over the country.

"I awoke to the face of my OB/GYN saying, 'Thank you. You saved your baby's life'," one mom wrote.

"Everything was going beautifully with my pregnancy until one fateful afternoon, when I noticed a lack of movement in my belly. I drank juice, laid on my side, and waited...and waited...and waited until panic set in. The doctor on call told me to head to the hospital for monitoring. There we found a limp baby. After a second ultrasound and an unimpressive fetal heart rate, I was thrown into a wheel chair and put to sleep to get the little one out as quickly as possible. I was told that our little Cooper would not have made it through the day had I not be counting the kicks and paying attention to his movement," wrote another mom.

The Count the Kicks campaign now has ambassadors in 18 states, a kick counting app that's free for mothers everywhere, and a supportive network of doctors, nurses, childbirth educators and expectant parents all over the US. Janet's work is not just saving babies, it's saving entire families (I should know, the campaign saved my son).

The baby girl saved last year? Maybe she'll cure cancer. That boy saved last week? He'll be a grandfather someday. Yes, Janet makes a huge impact at the Iowa Statehouse. But the life-saving Count the Kicks campaign she helped create is indeed her greatest legacy and a significant reason I hope you will consider her a Woman of Influence.

Warmly,  
Emily Price  
Healthy Birth Day Board President