

To: Dr. Mary Marshall,

As our primary care physician, you have been our rock. You've stood beside us when specialists made mistakes and then tried to cover them up. My back knows! You've gone out of your way—again and again—to help us fight for the care we need, and to navigate a landscape that is often extraordinarily difficult and even impossible for people with rare or complex conditions.

Emily's symptoms and diagnosis of hEDS have been life-changing, and not always in ways we expected. The fatigue, the chronic pain, the loss of independence—it's a heavy burden. But your kindness and belief in Emily's experience has lightened that load in ways we can't fully put into words. You didn't just understand her illness—you understood her.

When Emily turned 26 and risked losing health coverage, you stepped in and did what only someone with both medical knowledge and a generous heart could do: you helped ensure that she could stay covered another year while we work to find the right care, the right specialists, and, hopefully, better treatment options. That act meant more than you'll ever know.

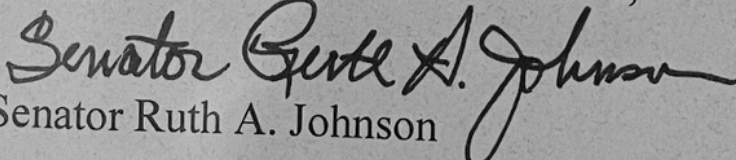
We also want to thank you for something that cannot be billed, measured, or reimbursed—your presence. You've made time when you had none. You've offered care even when insurance companies delayed or denied. And you've done it all while managing your own overwhelming challenges, including unfair delays in reimbursement that would make most physicians quit. But you haven't. Because you care so much – Family Physician of the Year!

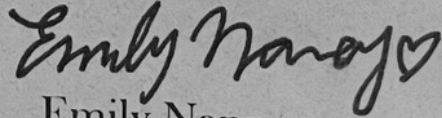
You were a nurse for 17 years before becoming a physician. That shows. It shows in your listening. It shows in your empathy. And it shows in the way you fight for your patients, even when the system fights back.

Dr. Marshall, we don't know what the future holds. But we do know this:

We are better, stronger, and safer because of you.

With deepest appreciation and love,


Senator Ruth A. Johnson


Emily Nanney