

Testimony of the American Lung Association in Connecticut  
In Support of Raised Senate Bill 929, An Act Concerning the Qualification  
Requirements of School Nurses.

February 23, 2011

Committee on Education  
Room 3100, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and Members of the Committee  
on Education,

I appreciate the opportunity to propose an amendment of Senate Bill 929, An Act  
Concerning the Qualification Requirements of School Nurses. My name is Michelle  
Marichal and I serve as the Connecticut Manager of Health Promotion and Public  
Policy for the American Lung Association. I would like to propose the following  
amended language:

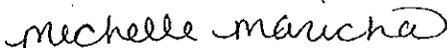
at least fifteen academic credits from a licensed or accredited institution of higher  
education in nursing-related subject areas including at least one hour consisting of  
an asthma update annually.

The *School-Based Asthma Surveillance Report 2010* found that 13.1% of public  
school children have asthma. Depending on the area in which the school is located,  
this number can be much higher. It is critical that the school nurses are properly  
educated and updated in asthma management, medications, asthma action plans  
and emergency procedures.

School nurses are the first person to respond to a life threatening emergency  
especially in children with chronic health conditions. Continuing education and  
asthma action plans are tools that every school nurse should have. School nurses  
also help children manage their asthma effectively. Children who have their asthma  
controlled are proven to do better in school and have a reduction in absenteeism.

It is critically important to add this language to the proposed bill because about 3  
out of every 4 students had an asthma diagnosis in the 2008-2009 school year  
according to health assessment records data collected by the Department of Public  
Health and only 1 out of every 20 have an asthma action plan on file with their  
school nurse.

If passed, this amendment will move us forward in protecting the health of children  
with asthma. We value your deep commitment to advancing strong policies and  
urge you to support this amendment to Raised Senate Bill No. 929. Again, thank  
you for this opportunity.



Michelle Marichal  
CT Manager, Health Promotion and Public Policy  
American Lung Association in Connecticut