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Testimony in Support of HB 5299

**An Act Concerning Authorization for the Use
of Antiepileptic Medications in School Settings**

Public Health Committee

February 20, 2013

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, Senator Welch, Representative Srinivasan and members of the Public Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 5299, a proposed amendment to section 10-212a of the general statutes which would allow trained but unlicensed persons to administer life-saving antiepileptic medication to students in transit to, from and in school settings.

The ideal person to administer medication in a school setting is the school nurse. Nurses are trained and certified to provide such care. Unfortunately, a student may experience an epileptic seizure when no such professional is present or even nearby. A realistic scenario would be when a student is in transit on the bus to or from school. In such a circumstance, resorting to a call to 9-1-1 – which is current policy -- will almost certainly *not* result in timely action, putting the child at considerable risk of an extreme, adverse outcome.

Rather than call 9-1-1, a trained layperson can easily administer FDA-approved Diastat, or rectally administered diazepam, in a pre-determined dose. Training, supervision and dosing can all be under the authority of the school nurse. The school nurse, the child's treating physician and the family can prepare a seizure treatment plan for the student which leaves no aspect of response in doubt. Families and designated laypersons can sign off on liability, protecting the school and the municipality.

This legislation is a common sense approach to dealing with a fairly rare yet potentially life-threatening situation which current policy does not adequately address. Rather than continue with this policy and accept an unnecessary risk to the student, let's pursue a remedy that eliminates the response gap. Thank you.