

Testimony to Education Committee  
Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
Given by Stacy Kamisar

My name is Stacy Kamisar. I live in Weston and I have a son with life threatening allergies to peanuts, tree nuts and seeds. Ben's first allergic reaction was in a school setting and I am here today to share my story so that you understand the importance of providing epi-pens in all school facilities so that all our children have immediate access to life saving treatment.

When Ben was four years old, I received a panicked call from the pre-school director, telling me to come to school immediately to get Ben and bring him to the doctor. She reported that he had large welts on his face and that his eyes were beginning to swell shut. I raced to the school and when I arrived, Ben's face was so swollen that he was barely recognizable. As I grabbed him and raced out the door, one of the teachers yelled after me....Make sure to tell the doctor

he was working with peanut butter. Apparently that morning, the children were making birdfeeders, which entailed rolling a pine cone in peanut butter and then seeds. Up to that point, Ben had never had an allergic reaction and had in fact, eaten many foods that had, at the very least, been cross-contaminated. We had no history of food allergy in the family and had no idea he had an allergy. Ben had not eaten the peanut butter that morning, but the touch alone -- perhaps he touched his lips or his eyes -- was enough to set off his reaction and each time I reflect on that morning, I realize how fortunate we were to have gotten him to the doctors office in time to get the appropriate treatment -- epinephrine. That day started a new chapter in our life -- one where we became educated about food allergies and anaphylaxis. The most important thing that we learned is that time is NOT on our side. Epinephrine is the only course of treatment when the body goes into anaphylaxis and the sooner epinephrine is given, the better the chance for survival. The terrible reality - one that haunts families of allergic kids every day -- is the fact that once anaphylaxis progresses past a certain point, it is not always reversible with the epi-pen.

That means, theMy name is Stacy Kamisar. I live in Weston and I have a son with life threatening allergies to peanuts, tree nuts and seeds. Ben's first allergic reaction was in a school setting and I am here today to share my story so that you understand the importance of providing epi-pens in all school facilities so that all our children have immediate access to life saving treatment.

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To me, this is all so simple – There is no reason for children to die, simply because an epi-pen is unable to be administered. Recent studies have shown that 24 percent of first time anaphylactic reactions have occurred in school settings,. This means that those children have not yet been diagnosed, and therefore do not have a prescription for an epi-pen. Let's work together to protect these children by giving them immediate access to life saving treatment and ensure that there are no longer needless deaths because epinephrine was unable to be administered in time. Thank you.

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diagnosed, and therefore do not have a prescription for an epi-pen. Let's work together to protect these children by giving them immediate access to life saving treatment and ensure that there are no longer needless deaths because epinephrine was unable to be administered in time. Thank you.