

March 4, 2014

State Senator Dante Bartolomeo,, Co-Chair
State Representative Diana S. Urban
Committee on Children
Room 011, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Co-Chairs Bartolomeo and Urban,

I write today in support of Bill RB 5303 which would allow school staff to administer emergency medication in the event a student has a seizure.

I was diagnosed with Epilepsy at the age of six and now at the age of 32, I have fifteen years of experience working with children in K-12 settings. In that time I've witnessed children of all ages having grand mal seizures, some lasting more than ten minutes.

I've also witnessed children and adults have Atonic seizure, also known as "drop seizures". I remember being on a field trip back in 2007 with a group of sixth graders at a camp. There was a nurse on site but in the infirmary building, which was about a mile hike away on the other side of camp.

The student had hit his head and was bleeding as the seizure continued. This student's seizures tended to last at least five minutes but on this day he had been seizing for ten minutes before the nurse arrived. His seizure stopped only thirty seconds before a second seizure started, and then a third.

Prolonged seizures, as in status epilepticus, patients can suffer brain damage in different parts of the brain. Research is also showing a possible link in prolonged seizures and nerve cell damage, which can lead to declines in cognitive function and quality of life.

So I ask you today to pass Bill RB 5303 knowing it can help children in schools knowing that nurses cannot always be there immediately to assist. With the proper training, school staff would be able to administer these medications. Administering emergency medication can help in preventing a child's seizures from lasting a long period of time.

I thank you for your time in considering this Bill.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth LaFlamme-Baker, MS, NIC, HS-BCP
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