

Testimony of Ella Stone
From Niantic on
HB 5460 An Act Concerning the
Administration of Glucagon in Schools

Chairman Gerratana, Chairman Ritter, Members of the Public Health Committee, for the record my name is Ella Stone and I am here to testify on H.B. No. 5460 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF GLUCAGON IN SCHOOLS.

Before I begin, I'd like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak out on this topic. This is a very important issue to me and my family.

Every day, diabetics are reminded of the burden they carry by at least 5 shots, 5 finger pricks, and for most children, their school nurse. These not-so-gentle reminders will not stop for the rest of their life. I received one too many reminders on November 11th 2015 when I was told I could not attend a school field trip with my friends. This mishap brought me to contact Representative Jutila in attempt to improve the experiences of children with diabetes in our state. With all due respect, I do not feel that it is necessary that Connecticut State Law 10-212 gives yet another reminder to diabetic students and their families of this difficult disease.

There are families who cannot make it to every school trip and who are removing glucagon from their child's required medication list. Law 10-212a is cornering them into putting their child's health at risk, all because this law is discriminatory.

There are also children being told that they cannot attend field trips because no one is trained and their parents are unavailable. Not only is this illegal, but also heartbreaking to young children, and frustrating to parents.

The most unrealistic part of the way this law is written is that other lifesaving measures, including CPR, AED use, and EpiPen for anaphylaxis, are all considered mandatory. It is unfair that glucagon is the only lifesaving measure considered voluntary.

After explaining this bill to many people over the past few months, I've run into common misconceptions among the general public. Probably the most recurring concerns the school's liability. Fortunately, school personnel are protected under the Citizen's Act, meaning that if there was an error in the administration of glucagon, neither the school or staff member would be held responsible.

In a perfect world, every school would have additional nursing staff to handle this gap in care. As you probably know, school budgets are under enough pressure. The answer is simple! Appoint an appropriate number of people to administer lifesaving glucagon in an emergency, just like EpiPen for allergies. Regarding the actual training, it is very simple. In fact, my father, stepmother, grandmother, aunts, and even my 15-year-old stepbrother have been trained. None of these people have medical backgrounds or certifications.

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I am asking for three things: access to care if needed, to be included in the same experiences as my peers, and the opportunity to not die. As a Type 1 diabetic, I support House Bill No. 5460. I remember feeling that diabetic children's lives were considered inferior to children with other needs. It was honestly the first time I've personally felt discrimination. My greatest hope is that no other child in our state will ever ask the question: Is my life valued less than the child sitting next to me?