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HB 5460 An Act Concerning the Administration of Glucagon in School

Senator Terry Gerratana
Representative Matthew Ritter
Members of the Public Health Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 5460, *An Act Concerning Glucagon in School*

At a time when more children require medical care for chronic conditions, some schools do not have a school nurse. School staff reports the care they are expected to provide, including the responsibility of medication administration, can extend beyond their comfort level. Safe and correct medication administration during school hours has been a growing challenge. School staff has become increasingly responsible for administering medications such as epinephrine and diastat. Are we asking too much?

“Practice makes Perfect”, January 2016
(<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/01/160129170533.htm>)

The study came to this conclusion:

"Our aim was to find out the long-term impact effects of learning. The results showed that initial learning and performance at seven weeks led to increase in activation in cortical regions...of what was learned... when compared to the first week. However, at 34 weeks, it showed reduced activation in comparison to week seven.

The study is cited to demonstrate whether learning can be sustained over time when not performed enough to achieve and maintain competency. Parents and caretakers of children with chronic illnesses live and breathe the issue every day. They are intimately involved with the needs and care of their child constantly. School staff may never encounter the task for which they are trained. Performing a task under controlled circumstances in a controlled scenario varies greatly from performing the same task in an urgent situation.

Voluntary means “done or given because you want to and not because you are forced to; done or given by choice”. To remove voluntary from this language or any other creates a less than desirable outcome. Requiring an unwilling participant to be trained to do an involuntary task is of concern. Lessons have been learned from training voluntary staff for administration of epinephrine, glucagon and diastat. The challenges related to that training will be compounded by forcing staff to administer glucagon, something they do not want or may be unable to do.

I understand the concerns parents and care takers have for the health and safety of their child while at school. The solution is to ensure that all children have access to a professional school nurse at school every day based on the complexity of their health care needs and in consideration of the social determinants of health that impact their education.

Thank you for your consideration.

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