



**To Members of the Kansas House Health and Human Services Committee
Re: SB 10 Student Self-Medication Policies
Presented by Judy Keller, Executive Director
March 17, 2005**

Asthma is a chronic condition that requires lifetime ongoing medical intervention. With proper treatment, asthmatics can lead normal, healthy lives, but without it asthma can be deadly. Twenty million Americans have asthma. In Kansas approximately 37,000 asthmatics are under the age of 18 and have had an asthma attack in the past year. We have had Kansas children die as a result of an asthma attack while on school property.

The American Lung Association of Kansas applauds Senate Bill 10 because it allows properly diagnosed and managed asthmatic children to carry their own medications and is consistent with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Strategies for Addressing Asthma within a Coordinated School Program."

We agree with the National Association of School Nurses, whose policy statement says, "...children have the right to easily accessible quick relief inhalers, including the right to carry these inhalers and self-administer medications when developmentally able."

Concerns expressed about possible scenarios in which a non asthmatic child takes a puff of another's medication are answered by Steven Simpson, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Pulmonary Disease and Critical Care Medicine, University of Kansas, "The risk of a student dying from lack of an epinephrine auto-injector or of appropriate medication for an acute asthma attack is far, far greater than the risk of harm from taking an inappropriate dose of either medication."

SB 10 is sound public policy and it will allow Kansas to be eligible for federal funding of asthma education programs. **US House Resolution 2023 gives preference in funding to states that require schools to allow elementary and secondary students to self administer asthma and anaphylaxis medication.**

Most children have mild to moderate asthma problems, and their illness can be controlled by regular treatment at home or in the doctor's office. Most Kansas school districts have adequate policies in place to provide for children to carry their own medications. Senate Bill 10 ensures that all children in all our schools have life saving medication when they need it.

Thank you.