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March 17, 2005, Amended March 18, 2005

Representative Morrison and members of the committee:

My name is Kathy Hubka. I am the Coordinator of Health Services for Wichita Public Schools. I serve on the Board of Directors for Kansas School Nurse Organization. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Senate Bill 10.

This bill has come a long ways! I want to thank everyone for their diligence in drafting a bill that is well on its way to provide for the safety and well being of Kansas children diagnosed with asthma and/or life threatening allergies.

I am aware that there are concerns because the age requirement was lowered to include kindergarten students. However, the bill includes the requirement that an assessment of the student's skill level be completed prior to authorizing self-administration of the medication. This assessment is a vital component in determining whether it is appropriate for any student to self-administer their medication. A registered professional school nurse has the expertise needed to work with the family's health care provider, parent and student in making that determination.

Therein, lies the concern. On page 2, line 25 thru 27, it states, "If there is no school nurse, the school shall designate a person to act in the place of the school nurse for the purposes of this subsection". This sentence is in direct conflict with language in the Kansas Nurse Practice Act, which governs nursing practice in all health related settings. K.A.R. 60-15-101 through 60-15-104 (documentation #1) speaks directly to services provided by nurses in the school setting.

The nurse is an integral part of ensuring the safety and well being of the student and the school community. I propose the deletion of that sentence from the bill. With this one change, the bill will allow the primary health care provider in the school, the nurse, along with the student and parent to determine the most appropriate plan of care. It is not wise to expect a non-nurse who does not have the educational background in nursing to assess and determine if a student as young as five has the maturity and knowledge level to carry and self-administer an inhaler, spacer and/or Epinephrine auto-injector in an emergency situation. It is suggesting that a non-nurse practice nursing, which is a violation of the Kansas Nurse Practice Act.

Representatives of The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program, working with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health developed a guidance sheet to assist Health Care Providers who prescribe emergency medication (Documentation #2). They stress cooperation between health care providers prescribing medication, school nurses and parents when determining if it is appropriate for students to self-administer medication. Other organizations supporting this document include American Lung Association, American School Health Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, The American Academy of Pediatrics and National Association of School Nurses, to name a few. The school nurse is key to the success of the health and safety of the student.

I am also including the National Asthma Education and Prevention Program Resolution on Asthma Management at School (Documentation #3). The goal for students is that they learn to self-manage their health condition. The resolution recommends that a school nurse supervise health services provided to the students. I agree with this resolution. Students need to become independent in their health care. However, their knowledge comes in stages. It is essential that the school nurse be involved in this process.

It is my hope that you consider and make the change I have recommended. This change is necessary so that the bill conforms to the language in the Kansas Nurse Practice Act. It is necessary because it further promotes the safety and well being of our children in the school community.

Once again, I do want to thank you for the time and energy that has been spent in drafting a bill that truly reflects the interests and welfare of our most important resource, our children.

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