

Testimony in support of:

Bill HB2086

Submitted by:

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Dear Rep. Steve Huebert and members of the Education Committee,

My name is Ronda Hutchinson. I live in Wichita, Kansas.

I have been a pediatric nurse for 26+ years. I have been a school nurse for 18 years in 3 different school districts.

Please consider supporting the proposed legislation regarding stocking Albuterol and Epinephrine in the schools for emergency situations.

Problem:

1. We need new legislation that decreases the barriers to stocking epinephrine at schools. Epinephrine is the first-line treatment for anaphylaxis, a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reactions
2. We need to be able to stock Albuterol at schools for respiratory emergencies related to asthma symptoms.

The top two health issues students have are asthma and allergies. Although many students keep emergency medication at school, I have had many students walk thru my office door having an asthma attack or having a reaction to something they ate. It is scary to have a child who can't talk because they can't breathe and there is nothing you can do for them except call 911. The EMS response time in Wichita is pretty quick, but it is still a gamble playing the waiting game. Rural areas have even greater response time for help to arrive. Seconds count when dealing with breathing emergencies.

- Imagine a patron of a football game that gets stung by a bee who goes into anaphylactic reaction and can't breathe.
- Imagine the child who walks into the nurse's office in respiratory distress as a result of sharing a granola bar at the bus stop earlier in the morning. He had no previous history of being allergic to anything.
- Imagine the child who ate a homemade sugar cookie in class for a birthday party not knowing it had almond extract in it and he is allergic to nuts.
- Imagine the child who can't breathe because it is spring and the fields are burning.

Emergency devices such as defibrillators and Naloxone are becoming increasingly common in schools. Often students, staff and visitors forget their medication, or they experience an emergency for the first time while at school. Keeping Albuterol and Epinephrine at school are additional measures to help fill the gap from the time an emergency is identified, help is requested and when it arrives.

In 2009, over 11 years ago, legislation was passed to allow Epinephrine in Kansas schools, but very few Kansas districts are able to pull it off because pharmacists don't support their role in the current legislation. No other state's stock epinephrine legislation uses the terminology of a "consulting pharmacist". This new legislation **IS** supported by the Kansas Board of Pharmacy

Solution:

1. We need to allow albuterol to be stocked and used in schools for emergencies.
2. We need new wording in our legislation that gets rid of the barriers Kansas Schools face when trying to get epinephrine in their buildings. We can do that with this new language that aligns with the other 48 states who allow epinephrine.
3. We need to expand wording that allows it to be given to visitors on school property.

I urge you to support the proposed Albuterol and Epinephrine legislation to keep our students healthy, safe and ready to learn.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ronda Hutchinson, BSN, RN
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Wichita Public School Staff Nurse
President of the Kansas School Nurses Organization