

In testimony to the House Education Committee January 20, 2021.

In support of House Bill 2086 Authorizing school to maintain supplies of certain emergency medications and to administer such medication in emergency situations.

Try to remember what you were doing when you were in elementary school as a third grader. Your days were often filled with learning how to punctuate, spell new words, add, subtract, multiply and divide. You were probably reading stories about different areas of our great country and learning about unexplored subjects. You most probably were not concerned with breathing or the possibility of needing a life-saving medication to ensure you would be going home that day.

On a typical morning, I went to my elementary building to begin my day where I practiced as a district school nurse for approximately 560 students. My morning started with the usual daily practices and student interactions until I had one student arrive to my health room with vague concerns. As he stood in front of me the color drained from his face and he sat down in a chair. I asked what he had been doing in class (school had not started and students were just entering their classrooms for the day). He said he was walking into school and had started to feel "itchy". He had not eaten or drank anything at school and had only taken off his coat and hung up his backpack. As he explained his face began to get red with hives and his lips became inflamed. He stated he was feeling "funny". I asked him what he had for breakfast which was a typical at home breakfast he had many times before. He then told me he had his a dose of medication right as they left the house. I quickly obtained the epi-pen junior we had in stock for our health room and administered in his thigh. He found some relief but continued to have some breathing difficulty. When the ambulance arrived they administered albuterol which relieved his breathing difficulties immediately. A quick call to his parent revealed he had been taking an antibiotic at home. His parents later found out he was allergic to the medication and had an unknown anaphylactic reaction to the medication he had taken at home. Thankfully I had the epinephrine available. If the emergency medical team had not been readily available and arrived so quickly this student might not have had the positive outcome he had.

Children in Kansas require life-saving medications every day. For those who have life threatening health events such as anaphylaxis and breathing emergencies, epinephrine and albuterol are essential to positive outcomes. Including the changes in this bill will break down the barriers allowing these medications to be available to save lives in schools when needed with the expertise of school nurses and trained designated school staff promoting successful student academic performance. I strongly support this bill for the safety and health of our Kansas children.

Respectfully-

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