

January 6, 2020

To whom it may concern,

We are writing in support of the Maryland Seizure Safe School Act, or Brynleigh Act, which calls for state legislation to ensure all school personnel, including nurses, teachers, and volunteers, are not only prepared but can recognize and respond appropriately and efficiently to students experiencing seizures. Approximately 1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy in their lifetime, 1 in 10 people will have a single seizure in their lifetime, and approximately 7900 Maryland children currently have an active epilepsy diagnosis, but there is only one nurse per 913 students. It is of vital importance that school staff know how to recognize and respond to a seizure should one occur in their classroom, school bus, or specialized area. Quick response to a seizure is vital and cannot wait for a nurse to arrive. It is not enough for school nurses to be the only ones with that training. Many students will have their first seizure while in school, so this is not just a matter of following a plan that is already in place.

The Brynleigh Act will ensure that all school personnel have some familiarity with seizure recognition, and in doing so, will make all our children safer in their school environment. Four other states have passed similar bills, and many other states will follow. We hope that Maryland will, as always, lead by example. We stand with the Epilepsy Foundation in supporting this legislation.

Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (LGS) is a rare, catastrophic form of epilepsy that typically appears between 2-5 years of age and represents 3-4% of children with epilepsy. 70% of those with LGS show moderate to severe cognitive impairment and more than 50% exhibit behavior issues such as hyperactivity, rage attacks, aggression and autistic features. The mortality rate is 5% with many deaths due to Sudden Unexpected Death In Epilepsy (SUDEP), injuries or an underlying brain disorder. To learn more about LGS please visit the LGS Foundation website at www.lgsfoundation.org.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Griffin

Director of Family Support Services
LGS Foundation (Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome)