

SUPPORT – BRYNLEIGH'S ACT SB0549

To the Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

We are writing in support of the **Maryland Seizure Safe School Act**, or Brynleigh's Act, sponsored by Senator Young in the Senate and Representative Kerr in the House. Brynleigh's Act is **SB549 and HB675**. This state legislation would 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.

As you know, our son Owen is severely impacted by epilepsy. Owen has been having seizures since he was 5 weeks old. Although he has had some short periods of time when he was "seizure free", a normal day for Owen usually includes at least 1 seizure. It is important that we know when he is having seizures, how many he has each day, how long they last, what they look like, etc. so that we can respond appropriately, giving emergency medication when needed, and work closely with his medical team to make any adjustments to his treatment plan. It is important that anyone caring for Owen, including personnel at school, knows how to identify and respond to Owen's seizures. While we have been fortunate that Owen's seizures have not been life-threatening, it is possible that he could develop more severe seizures as he gets older. There are also several other children in the school system who do experience seizures that require medical intervention.

**It is not enough for school nurses to be the only ones with that training.** 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 7,900 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.

As we continue to advocate for families affected by Tuberous Sclerosis Complex and Epilepsy, we are hopeful that Brynleigh's Act will be another step toward a safer school environment for our children by ensuring that all school personnel have some familiarity with seizure recognition and response. Five other states have passed similar bills, and many other states will follow. We hope that Maryland will, as always, lead by example. Please support this legislation for our family and others like us.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have and to support you in any way regarding this important Act. Please feel free to email me at [k.shortt@outlook.com](mailto:k.shortt@outlook.com) or call me at 734-891-9996. I would also be happy to meet with you sometime to discuss further.

As always, we appreciate your support and everything you do for our community.

Sincerely,  
Lonnie & Kandace Shortt  
1505 Luff Ln, Pasadena, MD 21122  
[k.shortt@outlook.com](mailto:k.shortt@outlook.com)  
734-891-9996