



DIVISION OF  
**STUDENT AFFAIRS**  
**DINING SERVICES**

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Dear Members of the Senate,

My name is Colleen Wright-Riva and I am writing in support of Senate Bill 477 – Public Health – Emergency Use Auto-Injectable Epinephrine Program – Revisions.

I am the Director of Dining Services at The University of Maryland, College Park and prior to that I was the Director of Dining and Retail Services at Cornell University. Between these two positions, I have been a Director in the collegiate setting for over 20 years and during that time I have witnessed a significant increase in students coming to college with life-threatening food allergies. In addition to those students who self-identify with us, there are many more who try to manage their allergies on their own. And most frightening, are those students who don't know they have any allergies and find out when they try a new food item in a new setting.

With legislation passed by Governor Hogan in May 2018, The University of Maryland now makes Emergency Use-Auto-Injectable Epinephrine available in its three dining halls. Senate Bill 477 revises that legislation and allows other food service outlets in the State to have the same opportunity as Institutions of Higher Education. The reality for any food service operation is that allergic reactions can and do happen – no matter how diligent the food service operator is at trying to prevent them. Restaurants, like collegiate dining programs, typically offer a large variety of menu options; they cook much of that food from scratch; they ask employees to handle many responsibilities, and there is a lot going on all the time – and, mistakes happen. With life-threatening food allergies, when a mistake happens, someone's life is at risk.

The University of Maryland takes special diets and food allergies very seriously. Having emergency epinephrine on-site recognizes that even with our focused effort, we cannot mitigate all risk and they serve as another line of defense in this serious matter. I believe many restaurants in Maryland would have the same commitment to their guests as we do to our students - and if allowed, would make emergency epinephrine available. This legislation is important because an individual experiencing an allergic reaction only has a few minutes before Anaphylaxis occurs and without the Epi-Pen, it may cause death. Often first-responders are further away than those precious few minutes. Having an Auto-injectable program would allow a properly trained employee of any food service outlet to provide critical life-saving assistance with little to no other risk to the guest. I urge you to pass this legislation.

Sincerely,

Colleen Wright-Riva  
Director, Dining Services  
University of Maryland, College Park