



**Committee:** House Ways and Means Committee  
**Bill Number:** House Bill 773  
**Title:** Public and Nonpublic Schools – Bronchodialator – Availability and Use – Policy  
**Hearing Date:** February 19, 2020  
**Position:** Support with Amendment

The Maryland Nurses Association (MNA) supports *House Bill 773 – Public and Nonpublic Schools – Bronchodialator – Availability in Schools* with the sponsor’s proposed the amendments. The bill’s focus is to ensure that asthma inhalers are available to students in an emergency.

Asthma is a serious and common disease, with six million children having asthma in the United States. Sixteen percent of black children and 7 % of white children have asthma. With appropriate clinical care, asthma is treatable. For children who have asthma, rates for missing school have dropped from 61% in 2003 to 49% in 2013.<sup>i</sup>

This legislation supports improving health and educational outcomes for children by ensuring that asthma inhalers are in stock in all public schools. With the sponsor’s amendments, the Maryland Department of Health and the Maryland State Department of Education would work with stakeholders to examine potential protocols for administering asthma inhalers to students in respiratory distress but who have not been diagnosed with asthma.

MNA thanks the sponsor and the proponents for their commitment to improving health outcomes for children with asthma. We ask for a favorable report with the sponsor’s amendment. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at (443) 926-3443 or [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2018-02-vitalsigns.pdf>