

February 17, 2020

Delegate Regina T. Boyce
316 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support of HB 773 – Public and Nonpublic Schools – Bronchodilator Availability and Use – Policy
(Bronchodilator Rescue Inhaler Law)

Dear Delegate Boyce:

My name is Lisa Hutchins and I am the current Pediatric Emergency Medicine Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center. I am writing in support of HB 773 requiring schools to stock albuterol inhalers for children to use who do not have their own inhaler in school.

I support this legislation for many reasons, the biggest of which is that albuterol is life-saving to children having acute respiratory symptoms but only if it is administered in a timely fashion. For children who have not had a prior diagnosis of asthma, have a diagnosis but do not have their inhaler or doctor's orders at school, or for children who have run out of their albuterol, the impact of this legislation could make all the difference in saving their life if they have an acute asthma exacerbation at school. In addition, albuterol is an extremely safe medication. If it is administered to a child who does not have a prior prescription or indication for it, the risks are as minimal as they can possibly be. This would be an extremely safe measure to take that would save lives.

Working every day in a pediatric emergency room, I often see patients that are brought by ambulance from school in severe respiratory distress. Ambulances do stock albuterol and paramedics and emergency medicine technicians are able to administer albuterol to these patients while they are on their way to us, but many could have benefited and had improvement sooner if something as simple as albuterol were able to be given at the first sign of respiratory distress, not after the ambulance team arrived. I believe this legislation would help the patients I see to breathe easier before reaching the emergency department, potentially reduce asthma admission rates, and decrease the number of complex interventions we have to undertake to allow them to recover from their asthma exacerbation.

I appreciate the support you have shown thus far for the legislation. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need more information from me from a pharmacist's perspective on the safety and efficacy of albuterol in schools.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hutchins

Lisa Hutchins, PharmD, BCPPS
Pediatric Emergency Medicine Clinical Pharmacy Specialist
The Johns Hopkins Children's Center
1800 Orleans Street
Baltimore, MD 21287