



January 17, 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 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 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. 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.

Easterseals DC MD VA is a leading provider of direct services to individuals with disabilities throughout the lifespan, and many of our clients have seizure disorders. Our staff is specially trained to react appropriately and deal with the seizure events in the moment. This has saved lives, and prevented unnecessary ambulance usage and emergency rooms visits. Personally, as a parent of a daughter with epilepsy, I have witnessed first-hand the panic and inappropriate behaviors that result of untrained staff and educators. This Maryland Seizure Safe School Act goes a long way towards solving the problem. We encourage its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Bram", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Larry Bram
Senior Vice President, Innovation