



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America

January 17, 2022

The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass  
Chair  
Maryland General Assembly  
Health and Government Operations Committee  
241 Taylor House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
Vice Chair  
Maryland General Assembly  
Health and Government Operations Committee  
241 Taylor House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 2140

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk

On behalf of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and the more than 32 million Americans living with life-threatening food allergies, I am writing to express AAFA's strong support for H.B. 49 an act concerning Public Health – Emergency and Allergy Treatment Program – Nurse Practitioners.

AAFA is the leading patient organization for people with asthma and allergies, and the oldest asthma and allergy patient organization in the world. Kids With Food Allergies, a division of AAFA, offers tools, education, and community to families and children coping with food allergies across the country.

Food allergies are affecting a growing number of American children and adults. Approximately 7 percent of all children in the U.S. have food allergies. Exposure to the allergen can cause severe reactions, including anaphylaxis and, in rare cases, death. Because there is no cure for food allergies, awareness and preparedness are key for protecting health and saving lives.

Epinephrine is the only treatment for anaphylaxis and is only available with a prescription. Children and adults who have severe food allergies need epinephrine with them at all times to promptly treat anaphylaxis. In situations where a camper does not have access to epinephrine (they may not have their prescribed auto-injector with them, or they could be experiencing their first-ever reaction to a certain allergen), the reaction can become life-threatening. The added protection H.B. 49 provides by allowing nurse practitioners to prescribe and dispense epinephrine autoinjectors to authorized certificate holders who operate youth camps to treat someone suffering anaphylaxis, even for their very first allergic reaction, is life-saving.

One preventable death is one too many. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. We are grateful for your concern for the safety of those managing food allergies.

Sincerely,

President and Chief Executive Officer  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America