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Oral Testimony
HB0384
"Public and Nonpublic Schools – Bronchodilator Availability and Use –(Bronchodilator Rescue Inhaler Law)."

Presented by Elaine M. Papp RN MSN COHN-S(R), CM(R), FAOOHN

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Chairwoman, Atterbeary, Vice Chair, Washington and committee members:

My Name is Elaine M. Papp. I am a Registered Nurse with a Master's degree.. Retired from my full-time job, I worked part time as a contract school nurse in Baltimore City. I am here before you to share my story and to advocate for passage of bill HB0384. "

In 2018, I saved a student's life, but lost my job! It was a harrowing experience. "While working at Vivien T. Thompson Medical Arts Academy, a student experienced a serious asthma flare. Her inhaler was locked in the gym teacher's office. The gym teacher was not in the building. Although 911 was called, they were very delayed in responding.

While the principal and teachers frantically tried to find the key to the office, the student lost consciousness was gasping for air at a rate of 70 breaths per minute with a pulse of 124. I was helpless. I knew that after loss of consciousness, the student would have a maximum of 15 minutes to live, if untreated. I was watching the student die.

Not knowing when the paramedics would arrive, I gave the unconscious student another's asthma rescue inhaler. .

Within a few minutes she began breathing normally and regained consciousness.

I lost my job because I made a decision to break the rules to save a life. This should not be a decision anyone should have to make. The rules:
     1) Never give a student another's medication.
     2) Never give a medication if you do not have doctor's orders in the student health file.

As a registered nurse. I had access to the Maryland Asthma Guidelines. I had EpiPen for allergic reactions and Narcan for Opiate overdose. Yet, I did not have an emergency medication to treat the most common life-threatening illness amongst Maryland's children, -asthma

I urge you to pass this important life-saving legislation.

Thank you. I am available for questions.