

Testimony of Kari Keaton
608 Autumn Wind Way, Rockville MD 20850
Ways and Means Committee
February 5, 2024
Position: FAVORABLE HB 420

Dear Chair Atterbeary and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

I am submitting this testimony today on behalf of my two adult sons, each with multiple life-threatening food allergies, and on behalf of the Metro DC Food Allergy Support Group. I am the facilitator of this support group of several hundred Maryland and DC area food allergy families.

Epinephrine is a very unique kind of medication because it is one you hope you never have to use, however, a person with potentially anaphylactic food allergies must have epinephrine with them at all times. It is the only medicine to control life-threatening allergic reactions.

Prior to August 9, 2024 emergency epinephrine was only available as auto injector devices--EpiPens, Auvi Qs, and other generic auto-injector devices. On August 9, 2024, the FDA approved Neffy, a nasal spray delivery method for emergency epinephrine. Neffy devices are already out in the world and can be used just like auto injectors in the event of anaphylactic allergic reactions.

Previous bills included the term "auto-enjectable epinephrine", but this is no longer valid because there is this new delivery method for epinephrine. It only makes sense to change the wording in all previous instances where "auto-injectable epinephrine" is used with the more accurate term "emergency use epinephrine.

In addition to the Neffy nasal spray delivery method, there is also current research taking place for yet another delivery method for emergency epinephrine--sublingual (dissolve under the tongue) tablets containing epinephrine. By changing the wording in the bills now to "emergency use epinephrine", any new delivery method for epinephrine that is approved by the FDA will be covered in the Maryland laws.

I urge the committee to give a favorable report on HB 420, and thank Delegate Palakovich Carr for submitting it.