

HB 222 Crossover_Nalxone Access Act_BHSB_FAVORABLE

Uploaded by: Dan Rabbitt

Position: FAV



April 1, 2026

**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

*HB 222 - County Boards of Education - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements
(Naloxone Access Act)*

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) is a nonprofit organization that serves as the local behavioral health authority (LBHA) for Baltimore City. BHSB works to increase access to a full range of quality behavioral health (mental health and substance use) services and advocates for innovative approaches to prevention, early intervention, treatment and recovery for individuals, families, and communities. Baltimore City represents nearly 35 percent of the public behavioral health system in Maryland, serving over 100,000 people with mental illness and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as “behavioral health”) annually.

Behavioral Health System Baltimore supports HB 222 - Educational Institutions - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements (Naloxone Access Act). This bill would further incorporate naloxone education into existing drug education and prevention efforts while authorizing a broader range of people to carry and administer it. Naloxone is a safe and effective overdose reversal medication and deserves to be accessible and well understood. These modest changes to existing policy will help to save lives and to reduce the stigma of substance use disorder.

The number of overdose deaths in Maryland has recently declined but remains staggeringly high. About 1,400 people died of fatal overdose in Maryland in 2025, including almost 600 who died in Baltimore City.¹ While these trends are encouraging, the state must continue to make preventing overdoses a top priority.

A primary strategy that Maryland has used to prevent overdose is to expand access to naloxone and to increase the number of people who are comfortable carrying and using it. HB 222 is a commonsense expansion of this approach. Naloxone is safe to carry and administer. Maryland has already taken many steps to provide access to naloxone and to stock it in schools, but overdose reversal is an intervention that is very time sensitive. Allowing students and teachers outside of the school nursing staff to possess and use it is a promising initiative that can save lives and keep our schools safe.²

No one at our state’s schools should ever suffer a fatal overdose when they can be easily prevented.
BHSB urges the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to support HB 222.

For more information, please contact BHSB Policy Director Dan Rabbitt at 443-401-6142 or daniel.rabbitt@bhsbaltimore.org

¹ MDH Overdose Data Portal, available at: <https://health.maryland.gov/dataoffice/Pages/mdh-dashboards.aspx>

² Calihan JB, Carney BL, Schmill DM, Bagley SM. The Call for a School-Based Approach to Opioid Overdose Prevention. Am J Public Health. 2024 Dec;114(12):1305-1308. Available at: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11540943/#bib9>

FINAL HB0222 Testimony (Senate).pdf

Uploaded by: Joe Vogel

Position: FAV

JOE VOGEL
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Education

Revenues



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB222: Educational Institutions - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

April 1, 2026 - 1:00PM

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

NARCAN is an over-the-counter medication administered as a nasal spray used to reverse an active opioid overdose. Administering NARCAN requires minimal training, and there is no danger posed to the recipient. While there is no risk associated with NARCAN, the rate of survival when NARCAN is administered has been found to exceed 90%.

Maryland has made significant progress in reducing overdose deaths, in part due to expanded access to NARCAN. Students across the state have been trained to carry and administer NARCAN, a critical step to addressing the spike in overdoses among young Marylanders.

Due to inconsistent school policies, students who carry NARCAN risk disciplinary action simply for possessing a medication intended to save lives. I have directly heard from students, including former House pages, who have been penalized simply for the act of possessing NARCAN – despite being fully trained.

HB0222 requires each county board of education to establish a policy that extends the authority to carry NARCAN to any individual acting in good faith. Right now, that authority is limited only to school personnel, leading to the penalization of students who have sought out the training and resources to provide lifesaving care to their classmates. The legislation also requires updates to curriculum to provide information on the lifesaving benefits of NARCAN.

HB0222 ensures young people understand the safety and efficacy of NARCAN and are not punished for being prepared to save a classmate's life.

I urge the committee to give a favorable report on HB0222.

NCADD-MD - 2026 HB 222 FAV - Naloxone Access Act -

Uploaded by: Nancy Rosen-Cohen

Position: FAV



**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 4, 2026**

**House Bill 222
County Boards of Education - Opioid Overdose-Reversing
Medications - Policy Requirements
Naloxone Access Act**

Support

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 222, a bill that would require local boards of education develop protocols to allow high school students who have been trained in the administration of naloxone to carry naloxone on school grounds. This is a life-saving policy to prevent overdoses among young people.

While school nurses can possess and administer overdose reversal drugs, the benefit is limited to times and instances where students are in school buildings during school hours. The ability for young people to carry naloxone will enable them to respond more quickly, and at times that are much more likely when young people are using drugs. This will enable students to help in an emergency situation before or after the school day, including at club meetings, athletic events, and dances.

The bill would also expand the protections from liability that exist in code for an individual who responds in good faith to the overdose emergency to include a school staff member or any other individual lawfully present at the school.

NCADD-Maryland urges this committee to give a favorable report to House Bill 222.

HB0222 - crossover bill - FAV - Naloxone Access A

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

HB0222_Crossover_Bill_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

04/01/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON CROSSOVER BILL HB#/0222 – FAVORABLE

Educational Institutions - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements (Naloxone Access Act)

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of crossover bill HB#0222, Educational Institutions - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements (Naloxone Access Act)

The state of Maryland has an office of Overdose Response which details the use of naloxone in Maryland to prevent deaths. There are significant resources available about the use of and application of naloxone to prevent opioid deaths to be found at <https://stopoverdose.maryland.gov/naloxone/>

This bill serves to require the State Board of Education to utilize the resources of the Overdose Response office in the educational environment through provision of updates to a certain drug addiction and prevention education program to include information on the mitigating effects of naloxone or other opioid overdose-reversing medication; requiring each county board of education and certain institutions of higher education to update certain policies to include information on authorized possession of naloxone or other opioid overdose-reversing medication by certain individuals and immunity from liability.

This legislation adds a common sense methodology to add to the goal of preventing preventable deaths from opioid usage, not just in an educational setting, but everywhere an overdose might occur by equipping more people with the knowledge of how to act in those situations.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass crossover bill HB0222.

HB222-SaanRhyne.pdf

Uploaded by: Saan Rhyne

Position: FAV

HB222 Written Testimony - Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee (4/1 at 1:00 p.m.)

County Boards of Education - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements

Baltimore County Student Councils

Saan Rhyne - Eastern Technical High School Student

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

My name is Saan Rhyne and I am a student from Baltimore County. I write to you on behalf of students in Maryland to request a favorable report on House Bill 222.

House Bill 222 requires drug addiction and prevention education problems to include information about the effects of opioid-reversing medications like naloxone (Narcan). This bill requires LEEAs and some higher education institutions to allow possession of naloxone or other opioid-reversing medications for those acting in good faith.

The opioid crisis has been raging in the United States for over 30 years, claiming tens of thousands of lives each year. Naloxone and other medications can help reverse opioid overdoses, but only if the use of these medications is understood and authorized. This bill ensures that students are educated on the beneficial effects of these overdose-reversing medications.

Maryland faced 1,315 overdose deaths in 2025. Medications like naloxone are up to 98% effective, meaning that nearly all of those deaths could have been prevented with proper access to training and medication. Narcan, a common over-the-counter form of naloxone, is a nasal spray that can be easily administered by any common person.

Narcan is considered both safer and easier to use than other common medications like EpiPens. EpiPens are generally stocked by school nurses and authorized for students to carry. While these two medications hold different purposes, they are both crucial components of protecting students from

Naloxone holds no negative effects if applied to someone not experiencing an opioid overdose. This medication is safe and needed in today's world - Nationwide, an estimated 2.2 million children and adolescents have an opioid use disorder, or have a parent with one.

Students deserve the right to a safe educational environment. Substances like opioids can, unfortunately, be found in or near schools, bus stops, and other areas which students frequent. HB222 will help to prevent fully avoidable overdose deaths, protect Maryland students and citizens, and implement comprehensive education, in addition to having no fiscal effect. Accordingly, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB222 from the committee. Thank you for your time.

HB222 - State Board & MSDE - Support 4.1.26.docx.

Uploaded by: Stefan Redding-Lallinger

Position: FAV

TO : Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

BILL: House Bill (HB) 222 – Educational Institutions – Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications – Policy Requirements

DATE: April 1, 2026

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) provides this Letter of Support regarding House Bill (HB) 222 – Educational Institutions – Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications – Policy Requirements.

HB 222 represents a proactive and critical step toward addressing the opioid crisis in Maryland by expanding access to life-saving interventions within educational settings. By requiring public schools to store naloxone and authorizing its possession and use by high school students, staff, and other individuals lawfully present, the bill strengthens schools' ability to respond swiftly and effectively to opioid overdose emergencies. The inclusion of liability protections for individuals who act in good faith further supports timely intervention and helps reduce hesitation in emergency situations, ultimately increasing the likelihood of saving lives.

HB 222 promotes safer learning environments and empowers school communities with practical tools to combat opioid overdoses. These measures align Maryland with nationally recognized best practices recommended by leading public health organizations and reinforce the State's commitment to student health, safety, and well-being.

The [Maryland Comprehensive Health Education Framework](#), in alignment with the national health education standards and written by a diverse group of content experts, includes research-based, age-appropriate topics, and indicators for students to learn about heroin and opioid addiction and prevention, including information relating to the lethal effect of fentanyl.

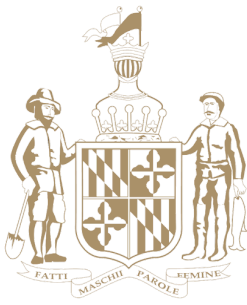
The State Board and MSDE appreciate the bill sponsor for their leadership in advancing this important legislation and for the thoughtful amendments that have strengthened and clarified its implementation, including refining the provision to allow high school students who have received appropriate training to carry naloxone. The Department recognizes the well-established safety and effectiveness of naloxone and supports approaches that ensure any opioid overdose-reversing medications used in schools are grounded in similarly strong evidence. MSDE looks forward to continued partnership in supporting policies that protect student health and safety.

The State Board and the Department request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **HB 222**. Please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at laurel.cratsley@maryland.gov for any additional information.

EEE-HB222- MOOR - LOSWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Keller

Position: FWA



Maryland's Office of Overdose Response

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Emily Keller, Special Secretary of Overdose Response

April 1, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: House Bill 222 – Educational Institutions - Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications - Policy Requirements (Naloxone Access Act)

Dear Chair Feldman:

Maryland's Office of Overdose Response (MOOR) submits this letter of support with amendments for House Bill (HB) 222 – Educational Institutions – Opioid Overdose-Reversing Medications – Policy Requirements (Naloxone Access Act).

HB 222 requires the State Board of Education, county boards of education, and institutions of higher education in Maryland authorize certain individuals, including high school students, to carry naloxone on school property and provides immunity from liability to individuals who respond in good faith to an overdose emergency.

Students in Maryland must be equipped with the information and tools necessary to prevent and respond to overdoses that occur in their communities. Youth under the age of 25 account for nearly 5% of all overdose deaths in the state, according to the most recent finalized fatal overdose data from the Maryland Department of Health's Vital Statistics Administration.¹ Our youth deserve to have all possible resources at their disposal, especially those that are evidence-based, safe, and effective. Naloxone is an effective medication for reversing an overdose, and it is safe; if administered when an overdose is not occurring, there is no harm. Students in schools are closest to the issue of youth overdose and must be empowered to be part of the solution to this issue. Education about how naloxone works and how to respond to an overdose is a vital component of addressing the issue of adolescent overdose mortality.

It is important to note that under the Annotated Code of Maryland Article - Health - General §13–3108(a), legal immunity is provided to individuals (including minors) who “administers an opioid overdose reversal drug approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration to an individual who is or in good faith is believed to be experiencing an opioid overdose.”²

¹<https://health.maryland.gov/dataoffice/Pages/mdh-dashboards.aspx>

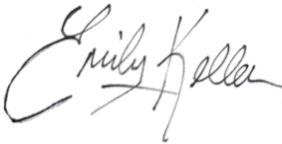
² <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=ghg§ion=13-3108&enactments=False&archived=False>

MOOR supports the intent of this legislation and requests an amendment to state that training and education should be provided only for the utilization of naloxone and that any mention of “other opioid overdose-reversing medication” be stricken from the bill text. The introduction of new reversal drugs in the school setting would require a significant amount of education and training, especially for reversal drugs that pose a clinical risk of more prolonged or severe withdrawal symptoms. In 2023, the American College of Medical Toxicology and the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology released a joint position statement that expressed concern at the use of nalmefene and cautioned against using it in place of naloxone due to its potential to cause unintended harm.³

This would also keep the bill in alignment with the Maryland Statewide Standing Order for Opioid Overdose Reversal Drugs.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Benjamin Fraifeld, Associate Director for Policy & Advocacy at MOOR, 443-346-3013.

Sincerely,



Emily Keller
Special Secretary of Overdose Response

³Stolbach, A. I., Mazer-Amirshahi, M. E., Nelson, L. S., & Cole, J. B. (2023). American College of Medical Toxicology and the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology position statement: nalmefene should not replace naloxone as the primary opioid antidote at this time. *Clinical Toxicology*, 61(11), 952-955