



Rhode Island Certified School Nurse Association

March 10, 2025

Dear Chairman and Esteemed Committee Members,

We are writing in support of House Bill 5491

Our organization has been working in collaboration with key stakeholders over the past several years to get this important legislation over the finish line. We believe that this year, the Seizure Safe Bill is a safe and effective Bill and urge its passing.

As Rhode Island Certified School Nurses, we support legislation that promotes the health and safety of our students. Our goals have always been and remain; to help all students stay healthy, in school, ready to learn, and keep parents and guardians at work. Safety of course, being paramount. As school nurses we currently support individualized health plans designed to acknowledge and prepare for the health care needs of a student diagnosed with a seizure disorder. We also strongly support the "*standardization*" of seizure action plans that are initiated by the healthcare provider as described in the Bill.

Management of the airway of an actively seizing student requires a skill set to manage this. Built into the current Bill is language stating that any non-school nurse who will be assuming the care and the delivery of the prepackaged nasal spray medication to students experiencing a seizure will be required to have American Red Cross or American Heart Association CPR and Epilepsy Foundation of America approved seizure education. Safety of these medically fragile students can not and should not be compromised. Anyone who administers this medication and cares for our most fragile students should be adequately trained and have the skill set to work with a potentially life threatening emergency. As a professional nursing organization, we continue to advocate at a minimum, for these educational requirements.

A concern in the bill has been that it is not specific enough to meet the storage and accessibility of these medications. Although the Bill states that it "shall be kept in a locked, secure, designated area, readily available" the Certified School Nurse Teacher or any registered nurse will not be responsible for the transference or delegation of this medication to the authorized school employee. Each school district will be tasked to work out the details; and must be managed in such a way as not to interfere with the registered nurses "delegation" responsibilities. We believe that this can be achieved.

In closing, the Rhode Island Certified School Nurse Association remains concerned about the consequences of this bill. As written, we feel that this Bill is safe and is the foundation of legislation necessary to support the students with Epilepsy. If all of the parameters are met; physicians created standardized Seizure Action Plans, non-nurse personnel receive training and education, and safe storage is maintained, this important legislation can provide the assurance of access and safe administration of intranasal, pre packaged medication prescribed to treat seizure disorder symptoms for our Rhode Island Students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Iacoi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michelle Iacoi, RN, Certified School Nurse Teacher
President Rhode Island Certified School Nurse Association