

Rhode Island Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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RIAAP Support for HB7481

Dear Chairman McNamara and Members of the Committee,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Rhode Island Chapter (RIAAP), supports SB2350, entitled the Seizure Safe School Act. As a practicing pediatrician, consulting school physician for 75 schools in Rhode Island, and the head of the RIAAP school health committee, I have been involved in the care of hundreds of children with epilepsy over the years. My goal is always to afford these children a normal childhood and school experience as safely as possible.

In the past children who had prolonged seizures were treated with either injectable or rectally administered medications which required certified medical personnel (registered nurse, MD, or EMT) for administration. The FDA approval of nasally administered medications has now opened up the possibility of safely training non-medical personnel to stop seizures if medical personnel isn't readily available. These medications, however, still have potentially dangerous side effects such as respiratory suppression, so appropriate safety measures must be in place. I first heard about this as a potential treatment from a school physician who was reporting the successful (albeit illegal at the time) use of nasal diazepam to stop a prolonged seizure in a high school athlete. Since that time, I have had several requests from the nurses that I cover to see if they can train their staff in its use. For now, without this law, the answer is "no."

Over the past two years, RIAAP has worked with the RI School Nurse Teachers Association, the Hasbro Hospital Neurology team, and the Epilepsy Foundation to address concerns about previous versions of this bill. I'm hopeful that the addition of CPR training, safe storage measures, and clear limitation to the nasal form of this medication will address these concerns, and help the committee move this bill closer to law.

Sincerely,

Gregory Fox, MD, FAAP

Advocacy Chair

Past President

Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

