

[Submitted electronically via: HouseEducation@rilegislature.gov]

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Education
Representative Joseph M. McNamara, Chair
Representative Thomas E. Noret, First Vice Chair
Representative Rebecca M. Kislak, Second Vice Chair
State House
82 Smith Street Providence, RI 02903

15 March 2026

Dear Chairperson McNamara and members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Abigail Sidoti and I am a Doctor of Pharmacy student at the University of Rhode Island. I write to you to express my sincere **support for House Bill 7896**. An Act to strengthen Rhode Island's school health and safety statute. This legislation strengthens protection for students with asthma, severe allergies, and diabetes by ensuring schools are equipped and authorized to respond to medical emergencies with life-saving medications such as epinephrine, rescue inhalers, and glucagon.

I support bill 7896 because it increases student safety and improves access to timely emergency care in the school environment.

Personally, I grew up in the state of New York as a child with asthma. I vividly remember having an albuterol inhaler in the nurse's office in case I experienced shortness of breath or an asthma attack while at school. That experience shaped my understanding of how critical it is for schools to be prepared to respond to medical emergencies. By authorizing schools to stock emergency medications and train personnel in their administration, this legislation addresses critical gaps in response when a student's personal medication is unavailable or immediate treatment is required before emergency services arrive.

Currently, students experiencing life-threatening reactions may face delays in treatment due to lack of readily available medication or trained responders. This bill mitigates that risk by allowing designated school personnel to administer epinephrine, rescue inhalers, and glucagon. These provisions reflect evidence-based public health strategies that many jurisdictions have successfully implemented to reduce preventable harm.

Importantly, the legislation includes safeguards such as parental consent, medical documentation, and individualized health care plans for self-administration. It also provides reasonable immunity for school personnel acting within the scope of their training and in good faith. These protections encourage prompt action in emergencies while maintaining accountability.

This bill also promotes health equity. Students from families with limited resources or inconsistent access to health care should not face increased risk during the school day. By ensuring schools are prepared to respond to foreseeable medical emergencies, the legislation helps create a safer learning environment for all students regardless of background or socioeconomic status.

I created a comparison document (attached) reviewing all states' laws on stock albuterol and other emergency medications in schools, focusing on authorization, training requirements, and liability protections. After analyzing national best practices, I found that Rhode Island's bill incorporates the strongest elements from across the country, ensuring schools are well-equipped and legally protected to provide life-saving care to students.

As a member of the community, I believe every child deserves a safe and supportive educational setting. The ability to administer life-saving medications prevent serious injury and save lives. This proposal reflects a proactive approach to student health and safety that aligns with best practices in school health policy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to recommend passage of this important legislation.

State Legislation for Stocking Asthma Quick-Relief Medicine in Schools

State/Bill	Authorization Type	Obtaining Medication	Medications Included	Who Can Administer	Liability Protection	Training Requirements	Notes/ Features
Rhode Island Proposed Methods	-Schools may stock albuterol inhalers for emergencies	-Standing orders or prescriptions issued to the school for stock medications. -Schools may accept donations from licensed distributors, manufacturers, pharmacies, or organizations.	-FDA-approved rescue inhalers and valved holding chambers -epi pens -glucagon	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Civil immunity for ordinary negligence in administering stock medications or student-carried prescriptions	-Personnel must be authorized and trained to administer	- Allows students with asthma, risk of bronchospasm, or anaphylaxis to self-administer prescribed inhalers or epinephrine (with parent and provider authorization)
Arizona (2017)	- Schools may stock albuterol inhalers for emergencies	- Requires standing orders from a licensed prescriber	- Albuterol inhalers	-Licensed RN/school nurses - trained school district employee	- immune from civil liability with decisions/actions taken in good faith	-For school district employees	- Longstanding program -training modules available - allows treatment of undiagnosed students in respiratory distress
Arkansas (2019)	- May acquire & stock albuterol via "Alex's Law" and physician certificate. Must operate under a standing protocol	- Req. standing orders from a licensed prescriber - Certificate issued by physician, APRN, or PA - Albuterol free or at reduced cost	- Albuterol inhalers	-Licensed RN/school nurses - trained school district employee	persons are immune from any damage, loss, or liability as a result of an injury arising from the administration	- Training required to receive a certificate, - Designated staff must be trained to store/administer.	- Districts must adopt health plans with physician certificates.
California (2023)	- Public school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools may stock albuterol inhalers and disposable holding chambers	- Requires standing orders -Prescription issued in the name of the school - Dispensed by pharmacy	-Albuterol inhalers; -disposable holding chambers (spacers) -Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate school epinephrine statute)	- Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	- Defense and indemnification provided by local educational agency for volunteering employees	- Minimum training standards established - Review required every 5 years or sooner	- Public/private schools included - Explicit inclusion of spacers/holding chambers

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Florida (2024)	- Schools may acquire stock short-acting bronchodilators from wholesalers or manufacturers	-authorized health care practitioners may prescribe in the name of the school -Licensed pharmacist may dispense to the school -Schools may purchase from wholesalers or manufacturers	-Short-acting bronchodilators and components (e.g., inhalers, spacers)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	- Immune from civil or criminal liability when acting in compliance with statute -Protection extends to employing school district or private school	- Mandatory training prior to administration - schools must maintain compliance with statutory provisions	- Requires parental permission prior to administration - Explicit prescriber and pharmacist authority included in statute
Georgia (2015)	- authorize public and private schools may stock a supply of levalbuterol sulfate	- Requires standing orders Maintained in the name of the school pursuant to statutory authorization	-Levalbuterol sulfate	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	- School personnel immune from civil liability for good faith administration or decision not to administer	- Local boards of education must provide information on recognizing respiratory distress and proper administration	- One of the few states to explicitly name levalbuterol
Illinois (2010)	- Schools may maintain a supply of asthma medication under standing orders - Students may self-administer and self-carry asthma medication	-Standing order issued to school -Medication stored in secure but accessible location -Obtained pursuant to prescription in school's name	-Albuterol inhalers -Epinephrine (authorized under separate school statute)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-No liability except for willful and wanton conduct -Parent acknowledgment required	-Trained personnel must complete a training under subsection (g) of this Section to recognize and respond to anaphylaxis, an opioid overdose, or respiratory distress.	-One of the earliest adopters; model for other states
Indiana (2017)	-Allows a school or school corporation to fill a prescription for an emergency medication; and store the emergency medication - may stock emergency albuterol inhalers	- Prescription issued in the name of the school -Filled by pharmacy -Stored as emergency stock	-Albuterol inhalers	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-immunity from liability for administration	-Required emergency response training through the department of education - mandatory reporting after use	-Allows treatment of undiagnosed students

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Iowa (2022)	-shall permit the self-admin of medication or the use of a bronchodilator canister and spacer by a student with respiratory distress, asthma, or other airway constricting dz	-Governed by state rules -Distribution and storage regulated by DOE and prof. boards -Typically obtained via Rx or auth. distribution pathway	-Bronchodilator canisters and spacers	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-No liability except for gross negligence	- Training and authorization required under administrative rules	-Students can self administered inhalers - Strong inter-board regulatory oversight
Kansas (2013)	-A pharmacist may distribute a stock supply of albuterol metered-dose inhalers, albuterol solution and spacers to a school	-Prescription from physician or mid-level practitioner issued in name of school -Pharmacist dispenses directly to school	-Albuterol metered-dose inhalers, albuterol solution, spacers, and nebulizers	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-immunity from liability concerning the administration of emergency stock medication.	- Training requirements for designated school personnel, which shall be conducted by a school nurse, physician or mid-level practitioner on an annual basis	- broad equipment inclusion
Kentucky (2015)	- Each school may keep a bronchodilator rescue inhaler in a minimum of two locations in the school	- May be donated to school -Or purchased by school if funding available	-Bronchodilator rescue inhalers (e.g., albuterol)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-No liability for ordinary negligence when acting in good faith under KRS 156.502	- In person or online Certification-based training from though the Department for Public Health	-Requires local board of education adoption; emphasizes asthma action plans
Louisiana (2014)	- may prescribe lifesaving medications that are maintained in the name of a school for use	-Prescription issued in the name of the school - Dispensed by licensed physician or pharmacist	-Lifesaving medications, including bronchodilators (e.g., albuterol) (Statutory language broad; epinephrine may be included under broader emergency provisions. Glucagon not explicitly listed.)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Immunity from civil liability for administration in good faith	-Training for the administration of such medication may be provided by a medical emergency training organization, a registered nurse, or a licensed physician.	-Students can self administered inhalers

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Maryland (2017)	-Schools may stock albuterol inhalers under a standing order Explicit inclusion of private schools	- Standing order issued for stock bronchodilators -Obtained pursuant to prescription in name of school	-Albuterol inhalers (stock bronchodilators) -Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate state law)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-No personal liability for good-faith actions	- Training required for designated staff	-Mandatory reporting of use -Explicitly includes private schools
Massachusetts (2016)	-Schools may stock albuterol inhalers for emergencies Requires standing orders from a licensed prescriber	-Requires standing order from licensed prescriber -Dispensed to school pursuant to prescription	-Albuterol inhalers (asthma quick-relief medication) - Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate state law)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-liability protection for good-faith actions	-Training on the proper use of an inhaler	-Requires written asthma action plans and documentation
Missouri (2016)	-Schools may stock albuterol inhalers under physician standing orders	-Prescription issued to the school under standing order -Standing order must be renewed periodically	-Albuterol inhalers -Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate state law)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Trained staff have legal immunity for administering this emergency medication	-Training provided by nurse or qualified person -Programs like AAIR's RESCUE initiative support statewide training and supplies	-Students allowed to self-administer
Nebraska (2018)	- Schools may maintain a supply of bronchodilators and have emergency protocols for asthma	-Obtained via standing order or school prescription pathway	-Bronchodilators (e.g., albuterol inhalers) -Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate state law)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Schools and staff protected when administering medication in accordance with protocols	-Annual refresher training required -Covers recognition of breathing emergencies, calling 911, and administering inhaler	-Allows students to self-administer their own prescribed medication with a doctor's authorization and parent consent - Requires reporting/documentation of each use
New Hampshire (2016)	-A school, under the direction of the school nurse, may maintain a supply of bronchodilators, spacers, or nebulizers	- Standing order/prescription issued to school; approved by school board	-Bronchodilators, spacers, and nebulizers	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-No liability for school employees, board members, nurses, acting in good faith	-Approved training by New Hampshire School Nurses' Association -Annual refresher training for unlicensed personnel	-Requires formal school board authorization

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New Mexico (2019)	-Public schools and charter schools may maintain stock emergency asthma medication	-Standing order/prescription issued to school or school district by authorized practitioner -Can include students without prior diagnosis	-Albuterol aerosol canisters and spacers	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Good-faith immunity from civil liability	- Required for designated staff covers criteria for administering stock albuterol to students	-Explicit inclusion of charter schools -Covers students without prior asthma medication
New York (2015)	-Schools may maintain a supply of emergency albuterol inhalers under medical director protocol	-Prescription/s tanding order issued to school -Administered under medical director oversight	-Emergency albuterol inhalers -Epinephrine auto-injectors	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	- Civil liability immunity for good-faith administration	-Training by nationally recognized organizations-Includes proper use of rescue inhaler devices	-Strong nursing oversight -post-administration reporting required
Ohio (2016)	-School district may procure inhalers for each school operated by the district to have on the school premises	-Prescription/s tanding order issued to school district -Medication stocked in each school	-Emergency inhalers (albuterol) -Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate state law)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Schools and employees not liable unless willful or wanton misconduct	-Specified training for employees/contractors authorized to use inhalers	-Requires parental notification following administration
Oklahoma (2020)	-Schools may maintain stock albuterol inhalers the school district may maintain at each school a minimum of two Epinephrine injectors and two inhalers with spacers/ holding chambers	-Prescription/s tanding order issued to school -Minimum stock maintained at each school	-Albuterol inhalers with spacers or holding chambers -Epinephrine injectors (explicit minimum stock requirement)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Schools and employees protected from liability for administration	- Training by healthcare professional or via state-approved program	-Parent permission required unless school nurse or trained staff
South Carolina (2021)	- school may maintain a stock supply of lifesaving medications in accordance with a prescription issued pursuant to this subsection	- Prescription issued to school for stock medications	- Lifesaving medications, including bronchodilators and epinephrine	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	- Immunity from liability	-Prescription issued to school for stock medications	-Requires coordination with state health authorities

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Texas (2015)	-Schools may maintain a supply of emergency asthma medication	-Prescription or standing order issued to school	-Emergency asthma medication (e.g., albuterol) - Epinephrine auto-injectors (authorized under separate state law)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Civil immunity for administration in good faith	-Schools must have policies for maintenance, administration, and disposal, with trained staff on-site during school hours.	-Students can self administered inhalers
Utah (2017)	-Schools may stock emergency albuterol inhalers authorizes a qualified adult to obtain a prescription for stock albuterol and 19 administer stock albuterol to certain individual	-Prescription or standing order issued to school	-Albuterol inhalers -Epinephrine rescue medication -Glucagon kit (administerable if diagnosis and authorization on file)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-No civil or criminal liability if acting in good faith	-Successfully complete a training program	-Requires reporting of each administration
Virginia (2017)	-Each local school board shall adopt and implement policies for the possession and administration of undesignated stock albuterol inhalers and valved holding chambers in every public school in the local school division	-Prescription or standing order issued to school	-Albuterol inhalers and valved holding chambers - Epinephrine (self-carry/self-admin & stock per local board policy) -Glucagon (undesignated doses stored/administered with training)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -Trained school district employee	-Civil immunity for good-faith actions	-Employees authorized by local health director and trained in administration	-Students can self administered inhalers
Wisconsin	- Schools may maintain stock emergency albuterol	-Prescription or standing order issued to school	-Short-acting bronchodilators and components	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Immunity from civil liability	-The school shall specify in the plan the training necessary to perform the activities	-Explicitly includes school-sponsored athletic events
District of Columbia (2018)	-Public and charter schools may maintain stock emergency albuterol	-Standing order/prescription issued to school	-Emergency albuterol inhalers - Epinephrine auto-injectors -Glucagon (for documented diabetic students)	-Licensed RN/school nurses -trained school district employee	-Civil immunity for good-faith administration	-An employee or agent of a public school who is certified pursuant to this section may also administer medication for which they are trained to a student to whom it is prescribed	- Includes field trips and excursions