

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Rhode Island Chapter

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Officers

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Allison Brindle, MD, FAAP
Phone: 401/444-8531
allisonbrindle@gmail.com

Vice President

Peter Pogacar, MD, FAAP
Phone: 401/884-8900
prpogacar@gmail.com

Secretary

Shuba Kamath, MD, FAAP
Phone: 401/444-8531
shuba_kamath@brown.edu

Treasurer

Sara Ford, MD, FAAP
Phone: 401/444-4612
SFord@lifespan.org

Immediate Past President

Gregory A. Fox, MD, FAAP
Phone: 401/438-6888
gregory_fox_md@brown.edu

Chapter Executive Director

Jennifer L. Mann, MPH
Phone: 401/743-1507
jmann.aapri@gmail.com

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Mailing Address:

American Academy of Pediatrics
Rhode Island Chapter
PO Box 20365
Cranston, RI 02920

Testimony in Support of SB2112

Dear Chairwoman Murray and members of the committee,

I am writing on the behalf of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics in support of Senate Bill 2112, the Matthew Federico Diabetic Safety Act, which mandates that insurers cover at least one form of glucagon which does not require reconstitution without copay or deductible.

As a pediatrician and pediatric endocrinologist in Rhode Island for over 25 years, I have written hundreds of prescriptions for glucagon, a hormone that can reverse life threatening low blood sugars in diabetic patients. Historically, in order to administer glucagon, one needed to reconstitute a powder (inject fluid into a vial, mix a powder into a solution, and draw it back into a syringe) and then inject it into a seizing or unconscious person. Over the last several years, however, pharmaceutical companies have developed glucagon which is stable in liquid form, which does not need to be reconstituted, and can be given by a simple injection or via a nasal spray, similar to Narcan in a drug overdose. **These products require very little training, and are much more likely to be delivered effectively in a stressful emergency situation.**

Unfortunately, like many newer drugs, these formulations are very expensive, costing several hundreds of dollars, aren't always covered by insurance, or, if they are, need full payment as a contribution to a high deductible. This high cost leads many families to choose not to purchase and carry glucagon at all, thus putting their loved ones at risk for hospitalization or even death.

I hope you will support the passage of SB2112 to ensure that those with diabetes in Rhode Island have ensured access to these glucagon products, and in doing so honor the legacy of Matthew Federico, who died needlessly from complications of diabetes last summer.

Sincerely,

Gregory Fox, MD, FAAP
Chairman, Advocacy Committee
Past President
Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

