



MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

Every physician matters, each patient counts.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.552 AND S.279
AN ACT IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACCESS TO LIFE SAVING TREATMENTS
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
JULY 17, 2023**

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) is a professional association of over 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical disciplines, organizations, and practice settings. The Medical Society is committed to advocating on behalf of patients, to give them a better health care system, and on behalf of physicians, to help them provide the best care possible. To that end, the MMS wishes to be recorded in support of H.552 and S.279, An Act Improving Students' Access to Life Saving Treatments. We thank Representative Ted Philips and Senator Barry Finegold for sponsoring these bills.

H.552 and S.279 are identical bills that would address the need for others to help students with diabetes by administering an injection of glucagon in an emergency situation. Glucagon is an emergency medication routinely prescribed for people with diabetes. It is easily administered by a lay person, such as by a parent, sibling, caregiver or school personnel, in case of severe hypoglycemia.

Students with diabetes may suffer from hypoglycemia as a result of exercise and too little food or an overdose of insulin. In extreme cases, hypoglycemia may result in seizures or a coma. In Massachusetts schools, currently only school nurses are permitted to administer glucagon. But in some settings, such as school trips or athletic events, a nurse may not be available. If passed, these bills would allow trained non-medical personnel to volunteer to administer glucagon to a student in an emergency situation.

Diabetes is a disease that results in high blood glucose levels. Insulin is used to lower blood sugar. Glucagon is used in cases of severe hypoglycemia where the child is incapacitated and can't consume food or drink to raise their blood glucose. Most young people with diabetes are acutely aware of their blood sugar levels and routinely self-administer insulin. Unfortunately, for them, it is a part of their everyday life. However, because fainting, seizure or death could occur, it is important to allow the administration of glucagon by a member of the school staff when the nurse or other school staff is not present and the student exhibits symptoms of severe hypoglycemia.

There is a long list of medical/diabetes organizations that support this, including the American Diabetes Association, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. At least 45 other states already allow for this practice, including the neighboring states of New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Based on information from these states, the MMS is not aware of any adverse events due to the passage of this bill.

The MMS thanks the Committee on Education for their consideration of this important piece of legislation for young people with diabetes and their parents. We urge the Committee to report the bill out favorably and in a timely manner.