



Press Release

AAFA Applauds House Passage of School-Based Allergies and Asthma Management Program Act, H.R. 2468

Legislation will create healthier school environments for millions of children nationwide



Washington D.C., September 29th, 2020 — Today the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2468, the School-based Allergies and Asthma Management Program Act. This bi-partisan legislation will help millions of U.S. children manage asthma and food allergies at school.

H.R. 2468 encourages states to improve allergy and asthma care in schools by giving preference for federal Centers for Disease Control grants to states that adopt certain management programs and policies. Similar to policy recommendations from the [State Honor Roll](#) report by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), states would be incentivized with financial rewards to implement the following in primary and secondary public schools:

- Methods to identify all students who have allergies or asthma
- Create individual student action plans
- Require school nurses or on-site trained staff during operating hours to administer medicines for both asthma and allergies
- Asthma and allergy training education for school staff
- Efforts to reduce environmental triggers
- Coordinate management of care with families and healthcare providers

“As schools face monumental challenges in re-opening during a global pandemic and need guidance from the federal government on how to best protect their students, House passage of this bill couldn’t be more timely. Not only is this bill protective for the long-term health of children in the U.S., but it can also help ensure more schools have the resources they need to protect from asthma and allergy while also reducing the spread of COVID-19,” said Kenneth Mendez, CEO and president of AAFA.

“Healthier kids at school typically means fewer missed school days, more time learning, fewer hospitalizations and ER visits due to allergy and asthma and therefore less strain on our health care system. AAFA also recently released the report [Asthma Disparities in America: A Roadmap to Reducing Burden on Racial and Ethnic Minorities](#). Like COVID-19, Black, Hispanic and Indigenous Americans experience the highest rates of asthma prevalence, morbidity and mortality. We know asthma remains far more common in Black and Hispanic children compared to white children. It also disproportionately affects children from poor and low-wealth families. H.R. 2468 is the first of many policy recommendations from AAFA that will help make a difference in closing the gaps we’re working toward eliminating,” Mendez also shared.



According to the Centers for Disease Control, about 6 million U.S. children have asthma and an estimated 5.6 million suffer from food allergies or both. Poorly controlled asthma and severe allergic reactions can be fatal. Asthma is currently the most common chronic disease among children and the leading cause of missed school days for students under age 18. Known as the “September Asthma Epidemic,” exposure to allergens and additional asthma triggers inside of schools also typically leads to a spike in asthma episodes and hospitalizations for schoolchildren and their teachers each fall. In January of 2020, Mendez testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health in support of H.R. 2468 emphasizing the significant role it can play in helping to save lives and curb asthma and allergy incidents.

AAFA thanks House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and Representative Phil Roe (R-TN) for introducing the School-based Allergies and Asthma Management Program Act. We also commend the House Asthma and Allergy Caucus co-chairs Representatives Eliot Engel (D-NY) and Fred Upton (R-MI) along with H.R. 2468’s 47 co-sponsors from both sides of the aisle for leading the way in it successfully passing through the House.

A huge thanks also goes out to AAFA’s community for their tireless efforts in support of H.R. 2468 by asking their representatives to co-sponsor and vote in favor of this bill to protect students with allergies and asthma. AAFA led the grassroots campaign, activating thousands of asthma and allergy families across the nation to answer this call to action.

AAFA encourages the Senate to move swiftly on enacting this bipartisan legislation and sending it to the White House to be signed into law. AAFA community members can immediately call on their Senators to take the same action as the House in supporting the School-Based Allergies and Asthma Program Act by clicking on this link RIGHT NOW: <https://www.aafa.org/2468>

Community members can also take action now with a secure donation here: [AAFA Advocacy For School Health](#)

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About AAFA

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA offers extensive support for individuals and families affected by asthma and allergic diseases, such as food allergies and atopic dermatitis (eczema). Through its online patient support communities, network of local chapters and affiliated support groups, AAFA empowers patients and their families by providing practical, evidence-based information and community programs and services. AAFA is the only asthma and allergy patient advocacy group that is certified to meet the standards of excellence set by the National Health Council. For more information, visit www.aafa.org.