



Memorandum in Support

S1043

February 12, 2021

Senator Ramos

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to requiring cafeteria staff to be trained in preventing and responding to anaphylaxis

On behalf of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and the more than 6 million children living with life-threatening food allergies, we submit this Memo in Support of the above mentioned bill.

AAFA is the leading patient organization for people with asthma and allergies, and the oldest asthma and allergy patient organization in the world. Kids With Food Allergies, a division of AAFA, offers tools, education, and community to families and children coping with food allergies across the country.

Food allergies are affecting a growing number of American children and adults. Between four and six percent of all children in the U.S. have food allergies. Exposure to the allergen can cause severe reactions, including anaphylaxis and, in rare cases, death. Because there is no cure for food allergies, awareness and preparedness are key for protecting health and saving lives, especially in the school setting.

Epinephrine is the only treatment for anaphylaxis and is only available with a prescription. Children who have severe food allergies need epinephrine with them at all times to promptly treat anaphylaxis. In situations where a person does not have access to epinephrine (they may not have their prescribed auto-injector with them, or they could be experiencing their first-ever reaction to a certain allergen), the reaction can become life-threatening. The protection S.1043 provides requiring cafeteria staff to be trained to treat someone suffering anaphylaxis, even for their very first allergic reaction, is life-saving.

One preventable death is one too many. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. We are grateful for your concern for the safety of those managing food allergies.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Mendez
President and Chief Executive Officer
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America