



The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
478 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

April 30, 2015

RE: Support for the Asthma Management Plans Act

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

On behalf of the [Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America \(AAFA\)](http://www.aafa.org), a patient advocacy organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for the 60 million Americans with asthma and allergies, I would like to express our support for the *Asthma Management Plans Act*. This legislation would amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to provide grants to schools to develop and implement comprehensive asthma management plans. These plans are an important component to providing optimal care and treatment for students with asthma.

Asthma remains a significant public health problem in the United States. An estimated 25 million Americans have been diagnosed with asthma, 7 million of which are children. Asthma is the most common chronic condition among children. It is also the third leading cause of hospitalization among children under the age of 15 and is one of the leading causes of school absenteeism, accounting for a loss of 14.4 million school days in 2011. Asthma costs \$56 billion annually in healthcare and indirect costs.

This bill addresses childhood asthma by directing schools that receive grants to develop asthma management plans that: identify all students with an asthma diagnosis, provide education on asthma for all school staff, and develop protocols and training to support clinical management of asthma symptoms. In addition, schools could also use grant funds to purchase asthma inhalers, spacers, air purifiers, and other supplies. These measures will enable school staff to respond to asthma symptoms by providing the appropriate care and treatment. Proper asthma care management will improve outcomes for students with asthma and thus prevent unnecessary emergency room visits and missed school days. By ensuring that schools are adequately equipped with the resources and knowledge to care for children with this chronic condition, we can improve both children's health and capacity to excel in the classroom.

We appreciate your leadership in introducing the *Asthma Management Plans Act*. We believe that this legislation has the potential to help schoolchildren in the United States better manage and control their asthma symptoms, and are proud to support this important children's health measure.

Sincerely,

Cary Sennett, MD, PhD
President and CEO