



February 28, 2020

The Honorable Delores Kelly
Chair
Maryland State Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Vice Chair
Maryland State Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Kelly and Senator Feldman,

On behalf of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and the more than 32 million Americans living with life-threatening food allergies, I am writing to express AAFA's strong support for S.B. 477, an act concerning Public Health – Emergency Use Auto-Injectable Epinephrine Program – Revisions.

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. One preventable death is one too many. Because there is no cure for food allergies, awareness and preparedness are key for protecting health and saving lives.

Epinephrine is the only treatment for anaphylaxis and is only available with a prescription. Children and adults 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.B. 477 provides by allowing trained personnel of authorized food service facilities to treat someone suffering anaphylaxis, even for their very first allergic reaction, is life-saving.

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