



December 5, 2020

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Minority Leader Schumer,

As New York residents and board members of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, we are writing to encourage you to support the School-Based Allergies and Asthma Management Program Act (H.R.2468), a bipartisan bill passed by the House on September 29, 2020. This bill is now before the Senate, and we ask that you consider including it with the forthcoming spending package. H.R.2468 would increase the preference given in awarding certain allergies and asthma-related grants to states that require allergies and asthma management plans and allow trained school personnel to administer rescue medications for allergies and asthma.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 9.6 percent of children between the ages of five and 11 years old, and 10.0 percent of children between the ages of 12 and 17, have asthma. Further, 47.5 percent of children under 18 with asthma have reported having one or more asthma attacks. As these statistics show, asthma impacts a significant percentage of school-aged children, and these students deserve to pursue their studies without fear that an attack at school won't be properly treated.

Additionally, it is well documented that the burden of asthma falls disproportionately on Black, Hispanic, and American Indian and Alaska Native populations. Decades of extensive research and public health data identified disparities in asthma prevalence, mortality and health care utilization along racial and ethnic lines. Educational attainment is a key indicator of socioeconomic status and a strong risk factor affecting asthma outcomes. Disparities in asthma and socioeconomic status reflect the same racial disparities seen in education.

H.R. 2468 would address several policy gaps to promote the health and learning of all children with asthma. For example, given the low number of states that set school nurse standards, it is important for states to require that someone—whether a nurse or other trained individual—be available during all operating hours to administer asthma medication. Similarly, H.R. 2468 would help fill gaps in state requirements related to emergency protocols, indoor air quality, and other preparedness factors in schools. Parents want to send their kids to school knowing that they will be safe, healthy, and ready to learn. H.R. 2468 would help ensure this is a reality for more children and families managing asthma and allergies.



By encouraging schools to put action plans in place and train personnel to administer life-saving drugs when necessary, the School-Based Allergies and Asthma Management Act will benefit parents, students, teachers, and school administrators across the country. Please quickly enact this non-controversial, bipartisan bill and send to the President to be signed into law.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

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