



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America

March 25, 2026

Representative Michelle Mussman, Chair  
House Education Policy Committee  
Stratton Office Building  
401 S. Spring Street  
257-S  
Springfield, IL 62706

**Re: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America Support Letter for HB 4739**

Dear Chairwoman Mussman and members of the House Education Policy Committee,

On behalf of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), I am writing in support of HB 4739 that would promote monitoring of the air quality in schools in Illinois. This bill is just the first step in making the air our children breathe healthier. AAFA is the leading patient organization for nearly 100 million Americans with asthma and allergies. AAFA is also the oldest asthma and allergy patient organization in the world, committed to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma and allergies through support, advocacy, education and research.

More than 930,000 adults and 160,000 children in Illinois have asthma. In 2024 alone, Illinois suffered 127 asthma-related deaths. Because there is no cure for asthma, effective prevention and long-term maintenance is key. Primary among these prevention measures is managing indoor air quality and reducing exposure to harmful pollutants in outdoor environments.

At AAFA, we believe that our children should be focused on learning at school, not struggling to breathe. For the children in Illinois classrooms with asthma, that struggle can feel like trying to breathe through a narrow straw. When indoor air quality is poor, common asthma triggers like dust, mold, and poor ventilation can worsen symptoms, making it harder for students to focus, participate, and stay at school. In fact, roughly one in six school absences is the result of asthma.

Monitoring indoor air quality in our schools is an accessible step that can prevent severe outcomes for children suffering with asthma, improve school attendance, boost academic achievement, and support teacher health. States across the country



have taken this step, including California, Nevada, Oregon, and Connecticut. In Illinois, implementing these air quality measures would help implement best practices. When we spend nearly 90% of our time indoors, good air quality is a necessity for health. Students and teachers spend approximately 7 hours of their day in school, and it is essential that this time is spent in a healthy environment.

When indoor air quality is improved, students with asthma have one less barrier to fully participating in their education. We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 4739.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kenneth Mendez'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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