



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

### House Ways & Means Committee

### HB 370: Education – Public and Nonpublic Schools – Seizure Action Plans (Brynleigh Act)

January 20, 2021

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that works to improve policies, programs, and services that support people with developmental disabilities and their families in our communities. The DD Council is led by people with developmental disabilities and their families. From that perspective, the DD Council supports HB 370 which requires schools to make action plans, train staff, and engage in training to ensure a safe and enriching environment for students with seizure disorders.

#### WHY is this legislation important?

- There are 7,900 children living with epilepsy in Maryland.<sup>i</sup> That is 913 students per school nurse.<sup>ii</sup>
- Education, information, and training ensures all school personnel are not only prepared but can recognize and respond appropriately and efficiently to the student experiencing a seizure-creating a safer environment for every student in Maryland's public schools.

#### WHAT does this legislation do?

**Brings awareness to the entire educational community so students living with epilepsy or a seizure disorder can feel safe in school and reach their full potential by requiring:**

- Two school employees be trained in recognizing the signs and symptoms of a seizure, administering first aid, and administering seizure medication.
- Annual training to school personnel with direct contact and supervision of students on recognizing the signs and symptoms of a seizure.
- Parents of a student diagnosed with a seizure disorder to collaborate with school personnel to create a seizure action plan.
- Schools to provide an age-appropriate seizure education program to all students consistent with guidelines published by the Epilepsy Foundation of America.

**The proactive approach that HB 370 provides is essential so that students who may experience seizures maintain their independence and meaningfully participate in all aspects of school life.**

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/data/index.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/epilepsy.htm>