



January 18, 2022

Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Room 131 House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary and committee members:

The Epilepsy Foundation and our local chapter, Epilepsy Foundation Maryland, are pleased to endorse House Bill 136, also known as *Brynleigh's Act*. This bill supports a critical priority for the Epilepsy Foundation and the epilepsy community writ large – safety and continuity of care in the event of a seizure at school. *Brynleigh's Act* would greatly improve the care and safety of students with epilepsy and seizures in schools by safeguarding physician-directed care by requiring at least two school personnel to meet training requirements necessary to administer or assist with the self-administration of FDA-approved seizure rescue medications, through requiring all school personnel to undergo an approved seizure recognition and first-aid training on a biennial basis, and ensuring that a seizure action plan is on file for each student with a seizure disorder.

Epilepsy is a medical condition characterized by seizures, which are sudden surges of electrical activity in the brain, that affects a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy, and approximately 1 in 10 people will experience a seizure, at some point in their lifetime. A seizure can happen to any person, in any place, at any time, and it is vital that school personnel are prepared to respond in this event appropriately and effectively. Compared to students with other health concerns, one Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study showed that students aged 6-17 years living with epilepsy were more likely to miss 11 or more days of school in the past year. For these students, proper seizure first aid and continuity of care while they are at school is crucial to ensuring they can reach their full potential with as minimal disruption to their learning environment as possible. Effective training and having student specific seizure action plan taken together represents important protections necessary to make certain that students living with epilepsy are safe while attending school or a school-related function. This will ensure they are not only prepared for but can recognize and respond appropriately and efficiently to a student experiencing a seizure.

The Epilepsy Foundation is the leading national voluntary health organization that speaks on behalf of the at least 3.4 million Americans with epilepsy and seizures. Our local chapter, Epilepsy Foundation Maryland, provides services and advocates on behalf of the 59,900 Marylanders, including 7,900 children, living with epilepsy and seizures in the state. Together,

National Headquarters

3540 Crain Highway, Ste. 675, Bowie, MD 20716

301.459.3700

Our mission is to lead the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.

TAKE ACTION [Epilepsy.com](https://www.epilepsy.com)
24/7 HELPLINE 800.332.1000



we foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services.

The Epilepsy Foundation and Epilepsy Foundation Maryland urge you to support this important legislation to help ensure children living with epilepsy and seizures are safe and experience continuity of care while at school. Together, we can make sure Maryland is at the forefront of this important nationwide initiative by joining the 12 other states that have passed these critical protections.

Please feel free to contact Dominique Brown, Senior Manager, State Relations and Public Policy, Epilepsy Foundation at dbrown@efa.org with any questions or follow-up.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura S. Thrall".

Laura Thrall
President & CEO
Epilepsy Foundation

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kira Eyring".

Kira Eyring
Executive Director, Regional Teams
Epilepsy Foundation Maryland