

June 14, 2024

The Honorable Matt Koleszar  
Chair, Education Committee  
Room 521, House Office Building  
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Chair Koleszar and Members of the Education Committee:

The Epilepsy Foundation and Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan are pleased to endorse HB 5329. 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.

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 affiliate, Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, provides services and advocates on behalf of the 108,900 Michiganders, including 13,600 children and teenagers living with epilepsy and seizures in the state. Together, we foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services.

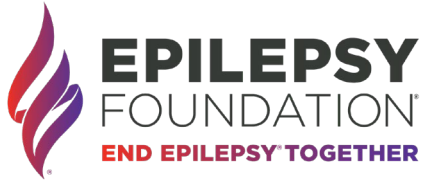
Epilepsy is a medical condition characterized by seizures, which are sudden surges of electrical activity in the brain, that affects a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy, and approximately 1 in 10 people will experience a seizure, at some point 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

It is essential that schools are adequately prepared to offer a safe and enriching environment for our students while providing reassurance to parents. This bill mandates biennial training for school personnel in seizure recognition and first-aid response. Additionally, schools will be required to maintain a Seizure Action Plan for each student with epilepsy, accessible to all responsible personnel. The bill also ensures the administration of FDA-approved medications. Lastly, it includes a Good Samaritan Clause to protect those who act in good faith under the bill's provisions. Taken together, the provisions in the bill represent important protections that ensure that students living with epilepsy and seizures are safe while attending school or a school-related function.

The Epilepsy Foundation and Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan are proud to endorse HB 5329 to help ensure children living with epilepsy and seizures are safe and experience continuity of care while at school. Together, we

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017, May 09). Healthy Schools. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/epilepsy.htm>



can make sure Michigan is at the forefront of this important nationwide initiative by joining the other states that have passed these critical protections for students living with epilepsy and seizures. Please feel free to contact Brianna Romines, President, Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan at [bromines@epilepsymichigan.org](mailto:bromines@epilepsymichigan.org) with any questions or follow-up.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brianna Romines".

Brianna Romines  
President  
Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bee Martin Lee".

Bee Martin Lee  
President & CEO  
Epilepsy Foundation