Burden of Asthma in Illinois

- In Illinois, more than 330,000 children have been reported as having asthma.
- It is estimated that less than 25% of children in Illinois have their asthma under proper control.
- Asthma is a leading cause of school absenteeism in Illinois, accounting for 313,710 missed days.
- Between 2013-15, the rate of children going to Emergency Departments (ED) for asthma was 83 per 10,000 overall, but 246 for African American children.
- $433 – the national average cost per ED visit for pediatric asthma for Medicaid/CHIP enrollees. An estimated 50.5% of Illinois children were enrolled in Illinois All Kids in 2016.
- Asthma medical costs in Illinois are projected to reach $1.9 billion by 2020.

Existing School-based Medication Policies Allow for Easy Implementation in Illinois

- Illinois already permits schools to stock undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors; this law has saved dozens of lives and provides a ready framework for voluntary stock asthma rescue medication.
- Builds on and fills a gap in existing Illinois school asthma policies, including student self-carry and self-administration of their own asthma medication in school (P.A.97-0361), and school asthma emergency response protocols and semi-annual staff asthma management training (P.A.99-0843).
- Administering albuterol has minimal side effects; not treating a child experiencing respiratory distress can have significant health consequences.

Stock Asthma Rescue Medication (Albuterol) in Schools has Been Proven Effective in Other States

- Ten states have adopted similar policies, including Illinois-bordering states Indiana and Missouri.
- In Missouri, in the first four years of the policy, stock albuterol has been administered an average of 2,122 times per year, with nearly 90% of students being able to return to class after use.
- A stock albuterol pilot program in an urban school district in Arizona resulted in 20% fewer in 911 calls and 40% fewer EMS transports; pilot program lead to statewide adoption.

Asthma is a significant public health issue in Illinois, impacting educational outcomes, quality of life, productivity and health care costs. Asthma can be well managed with trigger avoidance and proper medication use; however, barriers to asthma management persist. Rates of undiagnosed pediatric asthma remain high and medication access remains an issue. SB3015 would improve access to life-saving medication by allowing schools to maintain a stock of undesignated asthma rescue medication and allowing trained school staff to administer the medication to those experiencing respiratory distress. Improving access to asthma rescue medication (Albuterol) would reduce school absences, hospitalizations and long term healthcare costs, improve health outcomes, and save lives.

For more information, please contact Matt Maloney for RHA, at 312-628-0233 or mmaloney@lungchicago.org; or Amy Zimmerman for LCHJ at 312-605-1963 or azimmerman@legalcouncil.org; or Phil Milsk at 217-899-1566 or philmilsk@aol.com
SB 3015 SA2 & SA3 Supporters (list in progress)

ARC of Illinois
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Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America St. Louis Chapter
Chicago Asthma Consortium
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Legal Council for Health Justice
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