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ASTHMATIC SCHOOLCHILDREN'S TREATMENT AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2004

OCTOBER 8, 2004.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. GREGG, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and
Pensions, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 2815]

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, to which was referred the bill (S. 2815) to give preference regarding States that require schools to allow students to self-administer medication to treat that student's asthma or anaphylaxis, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without an amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

According to reports of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), of 20 million Americans with asthma, 6.3 million are children under 18 years of age. This chronic condition is the cause of 728,000 emergency room visits, 214,000 hospitalizations and 223 deaths annually among children. It also accounts for 14 million missed schools

days each year. The CDC reports indicate that working parents of children with asthma lose an estimated 1 billion dollars in productivity annually. Unfortunately, the number of persons with asthma has doubled in the United States during the past 15 years.

Consistent with the goals of the Healthy People 2010, the CDC-directed National Asthma Program is based on three public health strategies; (1) tracking, collecting and analyzing data on an ongoing basis to understand the “who, what, and where” of asthma; (2) interventions including translation of scientific information into public health practices to reduce the burden of asthma including school based strategies for children, and (3) partnerships with stakeholders in developing, implementing and evaluating local asthma control programs. The CDC recommends development of asthma friendly school environments designed to help students manage their asthma through a coordinated approach.

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program, coordinated by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, published a resolution recommending that schools adopt policies for the management of asthma that encourage the active participation of students in the self-management of their condition and allow for the most consistent, active participation in all school activities. In 2002, a committee of experts organized by Rand Corporation for improving childhood asthma outcomes also recommended that the Secretary of the Health and Human Services (HHS) consider giving states incentives to adopt policies that address the needs of children with asthma.

Schools should be a safe place where children learn and play; that should be true for children with asthma also. Thirty-one states have laws protecting the rights of asthmatic children to carry and self-administer metered-dose inhalers. Nineteen states expand this protection to include auto-injectable epinephrine. Furthermore, additional states have pending legislation to allow children to carry their inhalers and anaphylaxis medication at school. Experts, including the NIH and CDC report that self-administration of asthma medication reduces unnecessary emergency room visits, reduces missed school days, promotes participation in school activities and even saves lives. However, many schools do not allow and many states do not require schools to allow students to manage their asthma during school hours. The goal of this legislation is to build on the successful momentum that many states are currently experiencing in implementing comprehensive and effective asthma-related programs in schools.

II. SUMMARY

The bill, as passed by the committee, requires that the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in making any grant to States that is asthma-related, shall give preference to any State with statutory or regulatory provisions described in the proposed bill. The State must require each public elementary and secondary school to grant an authorization for self-administration of asthma medication if the student has demonstrated the skill level necessary to use the asthma medication and any device that is necessary to administer the medication. The State must also require schools to grant an authorization for self-administration of the asthma medication in accordance with a written treatment plan prescribed by the health care

practitioner with documentation from parents. The authorization granted to asthmatic children to possess and use medications must extend to any school sponsored activity such as before-school and after-school activities, and transit to and from school and school-sponsored activities. The plan must be renewed annually and the back up medication, if provided by parents or guardians, must be kept at a student's school in a location easily accessible to the student in event of an emergency.

The grant preferences are to apply to public-health-oriented, asthma-related grants to States generally awarded by the CDC. The bill gives the Secretary the discretion to determine which asthma-related grants to States would receive preference described in the Act. NIH grants to researchers or grants from other agencies to health care institutions for basic and clinical research, or diagnostic and therapeutic innovation, surveillance and epidemiology, and community approaches by health care institutions to achieve reduction in asthma-related morbidity and mortality are not made through States and will not be affected by this bill. The committee does not intend for this legislation to have an adverse funding impact on current grants and continuation funding of those grants solely due to a lack of statutory or regulatory provisions described in this legislation.

The bill includes a rule of construction that states that nothing in the subsection creates a cause of action or in any other way increases or diminishes the liability of any person under the law. The purpose of this rule is to address concerns of school administrators about potential increase in their liability, for example from errors in self-administration of drugs by asthmatic children that may result from the provisions of this bill.

The amendment made by this statute shall apply to grants made on or after the date that is 9 months after the date of the enactment of this Act. This will allow time for any State that currently does not have appropriate statutes or regulations in place to make necessary changes in their statutes. The committee anticipates that 9 months is sufficient time for any State to put in place provisions necessary to meet the conditions of the Act.

The bill expresses the sense of the Senate in commending the CDC for creating strategies for addressing asthma in a coordinated school program and encourages all schools to review the CDC recommendations and adopt the policies that best meet their students' needs.

III. HISTORY OF LEGISLATION AND VOTES IN COMMITTEE

On July 14, 2004, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, reported favorably a bill (H.R. 2023) to give preferences to states that require schools to allow students to self-administer medication to treat their asthma or anaphylaxis. On September 20, 2004, Senator DeWine (for himself) and Senators Corzine, Durbin and Kennedy introduced S.2815, which is identical to H.R.2023 as passed by the House committee. The committee passed the bill (S.2815) by unanimous consent on September 22, 2004.

IV. EXPLANATION OF THE BILL AND COMMITTEE VIEWS

The committee intends to ensure that asthmatic children are able to remain healthy, attend schools and participate in learning and play activities. To achieve these goals, they should be able to take the medications prescribed by their health care providers. Schools should be aware of the management plan prescribed by the child's physician and keep the back-up medication where the child can have access to it in the event of emergency.

The bill, as passed by the committee, will build on the successful momentum that many States are currently experiencing in developing asthma-related programs in schools. Federal asthma-related grants will be awarded by the Secretary to assist these States in continuing to develop effective asthma-related programs in the school system. Preference for those grants will go to States with demonstrated, comprehensive, and effective asthma programs-including provisions regarding self-medication in schools. The committee notes that this legislation does not affect whether States pass laws that require schools to allow self-medication for diseases and health conditions other than asthma and anaphylaxis.

V. COST ESTIMATE

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 27, 2004.

Hon. JUDD GREGG,
*Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 2815, the Asthmatic Schoolchildren's Treatment and Health Management Act of 2004.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contacts are Tim Gronniger (for federal costs), and Leo Lex (for the state and local impact).

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH ROBINSON
(For Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director).

Enclosure.

S. 2815—Asthmatic Schoolchildren's Treatment and Health Management Act of 2004

S. 2815 would modify the Public Health Service Act by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in making any asthma-related grant to a state, to give preference to states that require schools to permit students to self-administer medication for asthma and anaphylaxis.

The bill would not change the purposes for which the Secretary makes asthma-related grants. CBO estimates that enacting S. 2815 would not have a significant effect on the federal budget. Enacting S. 2815 would not affect direct spending or revenues.

S. 2815 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, but it would alter conditions for the Children's Asthma Treatment Grants Program and other asthma-related grants, giving preferences to

states who allow schoolchildren to self-administer asthma medication. While the bill would not alter the total amount of grants available, the new preference could change the distribution of funds among states.

The CBO staff contacts are Tim Gronniger (for federal costs), and Leo Lex (for the state and local impact. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

VI. REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT

The committee has determined that there will be de minimus changes in the regulatory burden imposed by the bill.

VII. APPLICATION OF LAW TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1, the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) requires a description of the application of this bill to the legislative branch. This bill does not amend any act that applies to the legislative branch.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

The short title of the Act is “Asthmatic School Children’s Treatment and Health Management Act of 2004”.

Section 2. Findings

The Section 2 reviews the findings of the Congress with respect to prevalence of asthma, and the impact of this chronic disease on the use of health care facilities, attendance at schools, and costs. The section reviews the current status of regulation in states and problems encountered by children who attend schools that do not allow self-management of asthma. These problems, in addition to missed school days, include many instances of illness, emergency room visits, hospitalization, and death. The section provides a rationale for the bill.

Section 3. Preference for States that allow students to self-administer medication to treat asthma and anaphylaxis

Section 399L of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g) is amended by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e) and inserting after the subsection (c) a subsection (d) to include the following.

The Secretary, in awarding any grant under this section or any other grant that is asthma-related (as determined by the Secretary) to a State, shall give preference to any State that satisfies specific criteria. The State must require each public elementary and secondary school to grant an authorization for self-administration of asthma medication in accordance with a written treatment plan prescribed by the health care practitioner with documentation from parents including documents related to liability. The authorization extends to any school sponsored activity such as before-school and after-school activities. The plan must be renewed annually and the back up medication, if provided by parents or guardians, must be kept at a student’s school in a location easily accessible to the stu-

dent in event of an emergency. The authorization must be effective only for the same school and the same year for which it is granted and renewed by the parent or guardian each subsequent school year.

The section will be applicable after 9 months from the date of enactment to allow States to pass appropriate legislation.

Section 4. Sense of Congress commending CDC for its strategies for addressing asthma within a coordinated school health programs

The section commends the CDC for identifying and creating strategies for addressing asthma with a coordinated school program for schools to address asthma and encourages all schools to review these policies to meet the needs of their student population.

IX. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with rule XXVI paragraph 12 of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following provides a print of the statute or the part or section thereof to be amended or replaced (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT

* * * * *

PART P—ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

SEC. 399L. CHILDREN'S ASTHMA TREATMENT GRANTS PROGRAM.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—* * *

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(d) **PREFERENCE FOR STATES THAT ALLOW STUDENTS TO SELF-ADMINISTER MEDICATION TO TREAT ASTHMA AND ANAPHYLAXIS.**—

(1) **PREFERENCE.**—*The Secretary, in awarding any grant under this section or any other grant that is asthma-related (as determined by the Secretary) to a State, shall give preference to any State that satisfies the following:*

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—*The State must require that each public elementary school and secondary school in that State will grant to any student in the school an authorization for the self-administration of medication to treat that student's asthma or anaphylaxis, if—*

(i) *a health care practitioner prescribed the medication for use by the student during school hours and instructed the student in the correct and responsible use of the medication;*

(ii) *the student has demonstrated to the health care practitioner (or such practitioner's designee) and the school nurse (if available) the skill level necessary to use the medication and any device that is necessary to administer such medication as prescribed;*

(iii) the health care practitioner formulates a written treatment plan for managing asthma or anaphylaxis episodes of the student and for medication use by the student during school hours; and

(iv) the student's parent or guardian has completed and submitted to the school any written documentation required by the school, including the treatment plan formulated under clause (iii) and other documents related to liability.

(B) SCOPE.—An authorization granted under subparagraph (A) must allow the student involved to possess and use his or her medication—

(i) while in school;

(ii) while at a school-sponsored activity, such as a sporting event; and

(iii) in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities.

(C) DURATION OF AUTHORIZATION.—An authorization granted under subparagraph (A)—

(i) must be effective only for the same school and school year for which it is granted; and

(ii) must be renewed by the parent or guardian each subsequent school year in accordance with this subsection.

(D) BACKUP MEDICATION.—The State must require that backup medication, if provided by a student's parent or guardian, be kept at a student's school in a location to which the student has immediate access in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency.

(E) MAINTENANCE OF INFORMATION.—The State must require that information described in clauses (iii) and (iv) of subparagraph (A) be kept on file at the student's school in a location easily accessible in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection creates a cause of action or in any other way increases or diminishes the liability of any person under any other law.

(3) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The terms 'elementary school' and 'secondary school' have the meanings given to those terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(B) HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER.—The term 'health care practitioner' means a person authorized under law to prescribe drugs subject to section 503(b) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

(C) MEDICATION.—The term 'medication' means a drug as that term is defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and includes inhaled bronchodilators and auto-injectable epinephrine.

(D) SELF-ADMINISTRATION.—The term 'self-administration' means a student's discretionary use of his or her prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication, pursuant to a

prescription or written direction from a health care practitioner.

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