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Testimony of Representative Amy D. Kuhn introducing

LD 211, An Act to Make School Safer for Students with Epilepsy and Other Seizure Disorders by Requiring Seizure Action Plans and Training in Schools
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Education Committee, my name is Amy Kuhn, and I proudly represent House District 111 in the town of Falmouth. It is a pleasure to be with you today to introduce **LD 211, An Act to Make School Safer for Students with Epilepsy and Other Seizure Disorders by Requiring Seizure Action Plans and Training in Schools**.

This bill proposes a comprehensive strategy to help make students with epilepsy and other seizure disorders safer at school. According to the CDC, at least 1,700 students in Maine have epilepsy or another seizure disorder.¹ When experiencing a seizure, prompt administration of rescue medication can be lifesaving.

The bill addresses the need as follows: Beginning July 1, 2026, the bill would require schools to employ at least one individual who has been trained to recognize a seizure and administer or assist in the self-administration of a seizure rescue medication. Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, all school staff subject to professional development will have completed such training.

The bill also requires that a student's parent or guardian provide the school written authorization for a seizure medication to be administered, a written statement from a licensed physician, and the medication itself in its original sealed package. A student's parent or guardian must also collaborate with the school to develop a seizure action plan, which would be kept on file and be distributed to any school employee responsible for the supervision or care of the student. Finally, the bill would require schools to provide age-appropriate seizure education programming to all students beginning in the 2026-2027 school year in order to make the whole school community more aware of this condition and reduce stigma.

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6631a1.htm#T1_down

Right now, school nurses are trained on how to recognize a seizure and respond with rescue medication. However, as this committee is aware, not every school has a school nurse nor is a school nurse always available. Nurse availability is especially problematic with out of school activities like field trips, sports and clubs where a school nurse is unlikely to be present. Currently, in these situations, students with epilepsy either rely on their parents to come along, which is not possible for many families, or simply sit out due to the risk of experiencing a seizure without an appropriate response available. This bill, if enacted, would enable students with epilepsy to achieve full inclusion, having a very significant and lasting impact for students across our state.

This law has already been adopted in 24 states and the District of Columbia, so it has been vetted in other school systems. Also, it is important to note that this bill is unlikely to require a fiscal note as the training materials referenced are already available through the Epilepsy Foundation. In summary, expanding the number of school personnel who are prepared to perform this straightforward task can be lifesaving and I urge the committee to support its passage.

Finally, I would like to say just a word about my constituent, Abby Werthmann, who brought the need for this bill to my attention. Abby is a senior at Falmouth High School, a strong student, an accomplished athlete, and a leader among her peers serving as both the student representative to the school board and as a captain on the field hockey team. During her time in high school, Abby has also become a champion for kids with epilepsy in Maine and across the country. I am very proud to have worked with Abby on this legislation and admire her commitment for trying to make the world a better place for the K-12 Maine students who will follow her.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to introduce this bill to the committee.