



Orange County Taxpayers Association

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To: The Honorable Ed Hernandez, Chair, Senate Committee on Health

From: Reed Royalty, President, Orange County Taxpayers Association (OCTax)

Date: March 18, 2011

SB 161 (Huff): Emergency Medical Assistance: Administration of Diastat

OCTax Position: SUPPORT

SB 161 would authorize school districts to train consenting school personnel, in the absence of credentialed school nurses, to administer Diastat (an emergency anti-seizure medication) prescribed by a physician to school children who suffer epileptic seizures.

OCTax analysis

SB 161 is a taxpayers' issue as well as a medical issue. SB 161 would provide a low-cost alternative for emergency care for students prone to seizures. It would be faster and more effective than calling 911 and waiting for an ambulance.

OCTax has no expertise in medicine, but we note that the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Epilepsy Foundation of America support training of school employees to administer Diastat and believe that it can be done safely. The Federal Food and Drug Administration has determined that Diastat is an emergency medication approved for administration by trained, nonmedical persons. OCTax presumes that parents and guardians of epileptic children would be grateful for the increased availability of emergency care for their children that SB 161 would provide.

According to its manufacturer, Diastat was developed specifically to make administration of the drug simple and safe. SB 161 would be a small yet important amendment to existing law. It would enable school personnel, on a volunteer basis, to help students avoid the pain, possible serious injury and even death that can accompany epileptic seizures.

cc: Orange County Legislative Delegation
The Honorable Bill Habermehl, Superintendent, Orange County Department of Education