



Highlights from the Hill

February 2016

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Epilepsy Foundation Comments on Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Rules

On January 28, the Epilepsy Foundation urged the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to revise their proposed rule on the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA). We are concerned that the proposed rule would negatively impact employees' covered spouses who do not want to disclose disability-related information. The proposal would allow employers to impose large penalties through workplace wellness programs if a spouse declines to participate.

These wellness programs are meant to be voluntary programs, but they are no longer voluntary when nonparticipation incurs a large financial penalty. We have urged the EEOC to revise their rules related to GINA by, among other changes, allowing spouses to submit a letter from a treating physician that certifies that medical risks that have been identified are under active treatment so that they may receive the benefits associated with these wellness programs. You can read the full letter at <http://bit.ly/EFEEOC>.

Epilepsy Foundation Responds to Senate Finance Committee Chronic Care Working Group Policy Recommendations

In December the Senate Finance Committee Chronic Care Working Group (CCWG) published a policy document outlining policies being considered as a part of the committee's effort to improve how Medicare treats beneficiaries with multiple, complex chronic illnesses. The Epilepsy Foundation applauds the committee's bipartisan effort to help individuals living with epilepsy and other chronic conditions, and provided public comments on the proposals. You can read the full letter at www.epilepsy.com/medicare.

Legislation Would Preserve First Responders' Ability to Administer Controlled Substances During Emergency

On January 12 Representative Richard Hudson introduced the *Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act of 2016* (H.R. 4365), which would allow emergency medical services (EMS) agencies to continue using standing orders from their medical director to administer approved medications to their patients under the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). There is a demonstrated clinical need for administering controlled substance medications, such as to treat active seizures, during an emergency. Delaying immediate treatment by first responders with a readily available emergency medication can be life-threatening. Prolonged, cluster, or status seizures may cause serious injury and even death. Updating the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to recognize the existing delivery model of EMS agencies is essential to protect patients. H.R. 4365 would provide the DEA the ability to oversee the use of controlled substances in EMS agencies and prevent drug diversion while ensuring essential medicines are provided by first responders to individuals in need. You can read the full letter at <http://bit.ly/EFHR4365>.

In The States

Virginia Students Honored at Use a Helmet Prevent Epilepsy Event



Lt. Governor Northam (right) with two of the winning students (center) and a teacher whose class participated (left)

On February 4 the Epilepsy Foundation of Virginia brought students from throughout Virginia to Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam's office to honor them for winning a poster contest as part of the Use a Helmet Prevent Epilepsy campaign. We would like to congratulate all of the winning kids on their success and thank them and Lt. Gov. Northam for all the work they have done for the epilepsy community.

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