

2/23/2024 Testimony S 187

Senators Lyons, Weeks and Senate Health and Welfare Committee members,

Good morning. My name is Clayton Wetzel and I am a full time school nurse at Waitsfield Elementary and the current Treasurer/Executive Committee Member for the Vermont State School Nurses Association (VSSNA).

Thank you so much for affording the time for the Vermont State School Nurses to share their thoughts on this bill. It is so important for those on the front lines of care for Vermont's children in schools to weigh in on how legislation will affect that care.

As you know, skin cancer is something we can work to prevent with simple sunscreen and sun exposure awareness. The American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association (ASDSA) created the SUNucate Coalition, which is comprised of 59 medical specialty associations, patient advocacy groups and other organizations and uses its collective voice to protect students from dangerous ultra violet (UV) exposure while outdoors at school. The VSSNA reviewed the SUNucate model legislation along with existing state legislation and submitted recommended language to Vermont Secretary of Education (Dr. French) on March 9, 2023. Currently 27 states and the District of Columbia have already passed similar legislation. Along with Vermont, two additional states (Massachusetts and New Jersey) have proposed language submitted for legislative review this year. We are very appreciative that S 187 contains all of our recommended language in the current sunscreen legislation.

We are pleased the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) was proactive and did reach out to our organization for input into the bill before you. The language in the bill works nicely and will allow us to continue our high standards of care regarding medication administration in schools. S 187 works to create a consistent state policy that ensures children have access to FDA-approved sunscreen at school for over-the-counter use and it does not require the school to provide sunscreen or have school personnel apply sunscreen. Passage of S 187 will provide protection to more than 80,000 Vermont children from damaging UV exposure

In my time here with you, I am happy to take any questions regarding medication in schools or any other question about the specialty of school nursing and how we advocate for children's health and safety .

Additionally, please note that the VSSNA supports the use of child restraint systems in motor vehicles and the public outreach campaign, but does not have any additional comments or testimony for § 1258. Child Restraint Systems within this Bill.

In summary, we are grateful to representatives for considering the health and safety of students in our schools. We appreciate the time to share the school nurse perspective as you consider revisions to S 187.

Respectfully submitted,

Clayton Wetzel, BSN, RN, NCSN

VSSNA Treasurer, Immediate Past Vermont-Director to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), 2017-18 Vermont School Nurse of the Year