

Public Comment

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Carolina Kirsten Volzka was a vibrant girl that lit up any room she walked into, in particular, the skating rink she so loved. Kahi Augustin was an honor roll student and a talented artist, who aspired to be a professional illustrator. Seizures cut Carolina and Kahi's dreams short. They were 13 and 17 years old, respectively, when they suffered seizures on school property last year. No one responded to their seizures properly or in time.

Passing SB 1322 is a matter of life and death. There are 11,000 children in Virginia with diagnosed seizure disorders—like Kahi. We also know that about 10% of people will have a seizure in their lifetime, regardless of whether they have a seizure disorder or not—like Carolina. Sending children to school knowing how common seizures are, yet doing nothing to prepare staff for action in the event of a seizure is grossly negligent.

Those opposed to the passage of this bill have called the seizure response training and seizure action plan components a "burden" for school staff. How can someone entrusted with the life of a child in good conscience believe that? We send our children to school trusting that staff cares deeply about shaping their futures. Well, you cannot shape a student's future without understanding the health risks that so deeply shape their present and that are hell-bent on taking that future away.

Virginia school staff are required to receive First Aid/CPR/AED training, because a medical emergency like an allergic reaction or heart attack can occur at any time. All parties—parents, staff, and students—can agree that schools would feel unsafe were staff not to have this preparedness. Well, schools do, in fact, remain unsafe. Those with seizure disorders, and really all students since, again, anyone can have a seizure, are not safe.

It is in the best interest of all Virginians to support this bill. Five other states have already enacted Seizure Safe School laws and 18 more have legislation moving its way through their legislatures. International health organizations have granted their support to this legislation, meaning that the whole world is watching what action or inaction Virginia takes.

Virginia has been a leader through much of her history and here is yet another opportunity to be one. We can be up next or be last when shaping schools to be seizure safe. In the amount of time it took to think this legislation over from its first introduction last year, the world lost Carolina and Kahi. Please don't let this happen again and [vote yes on SB 1322](#). Thank you.

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