

HB 922 -- ALLERGY PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IN SCHOOLS

SPONSOR: Smith (14)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill requires each school district to adopt a policy on allergy prevention and response by July 1, 2011, with priority given to addressing potentially deadly food-borne allergies. Elements that the policy must contain include distinguishing between building-wide, classroom, and individual approaches to allergy prevention and management; providing an age-appropriate response to building-level and classroom-level allergy education and prevention; describing the role of certificated and noncertificated staff, parents, and other students in preventing and mitigating allergies; addressing confidentiality issues relating to sharing student medical information; and coordinating with other entities to ensure that existing school safety and environmental policies do not conflict. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in cooperation with any appropriate professional association, must develop a model policy by July 1, 2010.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that food-borne allergies are potentially life-threatening, so teachers, parents, and students need to know how to prevent allergy attacks and how to respond if a student does have a severe reaction. Districts need guidelines for handling these situations.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Smith (14); and Richard Simpson.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say while the bill does not appear to extend rights to those who do not currently have Section 504 or an Individual Education Plan for handling their allergies, it is possible that someone may attempt to use the policy to gain more rights.

Testifying on the bill was Penney Rector, School Administrators Coalition.