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March 16, 2005

AB 182

**Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee. Our names are Caroline Moassessi and Luann Moore. We are parents of children with life threatening food allergies and asthma. We are also cofounders of the Northern Nevada Asthma and Food Allergy Parent Education Group (AAPE) and we support AB182.

We started AAPE last year because after our children were diagnosed we found that there was no source of support or information in Northern Nevada for food allergies. As we encountered parents with similar issues we could see the incredible value of information sharing and knowing we are not alone.

Our group is committed to being a resource of information and support to families dealing with asthma and severe food allergies. Group membership now includes over 60 families and is growing, as there is increasing incidence of both food allergy and asthma. Most, if not all, of the children in our group carry an Epi-pen and/or an inhaler with them, by doctor's orders. Few are currently enrolled in the Washoe County School system. Many choose home schooling or private school because current school policy is in conflict with what their doctors have deemed safe (ie. that their medications must be with them at all times). Of the children in Northern Nevada for whom private school or home schooling is not an option, it is likely that some already carry these medications to school with them secretly and use them privately as needed. Isn't it better for the school to be aware of health issues and important life saving medications before they are needed rather than have them remain hidden in a child's backpack in an emergency.

While our membership is small in comparison to the prevalence of this problem, we are a fair representation of parents of children with asthma and life-threatening food allergies. From our members we have received numerous e-mails and phone calls in strong support of AB182 and none in opposition.

As one parent wrote, unencumbered access to these medications "means life or death to my child."

Please pass AB182 as a step to increase the safety of children with asthma and life-threatening food allergies while they receive the public education they are entitled to under the laws of the state of Nevada.

Sincerely,

Caroline Moassessi and Luann Moore

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