



Dear Senator Roblan and members of the Senate Health Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Adrenal Insufficiency United in support of HB2597.

Often children with chronic conditions are forced to miss school due to illness, doctors appointments or as a safety precaution. Since children with adrenal insufficiency can have serious complications from something as simple as a stomach bug, some parents choose to keep their children home during outbreaks of school illness.

Some children with chronic conditions such as adrenal insufficiency may have learning difficulties due to their condition and qualify for an IEP or 504. But not only are parents unaware of the differences between these two plans, many don't even know that there is something called a 504. Many parents of children who are academically in line with their peers are not informed or aware that their child may qualify for a 504 plan.

In addition to physical issues, children with chronic conditions such as adrenal insufficiency can suffer from anxiety and depression. A child with adrenal insufficiency may be very healthy physically, but have trouble with school attendance due to their poor emotional health. Again parents may be unaware that their child could qualify for an IEP under the "Other Health Impaired" or "ED" category.

Schools should not be punishing and threatening the parents of children suffering from physical or emotional issues. Truancy notices and hearings will not help a child to go school if the reason is due to a physical, emotional or educational issue. The notices and threats of legal action will only serve to expand the divide between parent and school.

All parents have the right to request a 504 or IEP, but most do not know this. Booklets about parent rights are not routinely handed out to every family in a school district. In fact they are only given out once the IEP process has begun. HB2597 will more effectively implement IDEA by informing more parents of their rights. HB2597 will place the school where they should be, as an advocate striving to ensure every child gets their free and appropriate education.

We urge you to send HB2597 to the Senate floor for a full vote.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Knapp
Director: AIU

AIU; P.O. Box 72407; Springfield, OR; 97475
contact@aiunited.org or 855-248-6483
www.aiunited.org