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FLOOR DEBATE

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life-threatening. Asthma is a chronic disease with symptoms that may come and go, and is often related to allergies. Symptoms occur when the airway becomes inflamed, mucus production obstructs the airways, and the muscles around the airways become constricted. The most dangerous symptoms of asthma may include marked chest tightness, wheezing, persistent cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or speaking, changes in mental status, chest reactions, and cyanosis, which is a blue coloration of the lips and hands. Asthma is the most common chronic childhood disease in the United States. Nearly 1 in 13 school-age children have asthma. Asthma is one of the leading causes of school absenteeism and hospitalization for children. Asthma affects academic performance. Missed sleep due to nighttime asthma can cause poor memory recall, lack of concentration, and mood swings. Asthma is the leading cause of missed school days. It causes more than 5,000 deaths a year, and affects 6.3 million missed school days annually. Asthma accounts for 14 million missed school days annually. Parents of students with asthma lose \$1 billion a year in productivity. By supporting LB 1148, children would be able to carry lifesaving medications with them in schools. This is so important, because asthma attacks often happen unexpectedly and quickly. The second part of the bill deals with allowing children to carry EpiPens which treat anaphylaxis. Just in brief, anaphylaxis is a sudden severe, potentially fatal, systemic allergic reaction that can happen unexpectedly, and the most common triggers are peanut allergies, shellfish, dusts and molds. The annual incidence of anaphylactic reactions is about 30 per 100,000 people. This is a life-threatening allergic condition that can occur at any time. I have passed out some information sheets in regards to...in regards to asthma and anaphylaxis. LB 1148 would allow children to carry their asthma medications and their anaphylaxis medications with them, but not without responsibility. LB 1148 defines the student responsibility, the parent responsibility, the responsibility of the school and the nurses involved, and the healthcare provider. Before a child would be allowed to carry the medications with them, they have to be involved in what's called an asthma action plan, which is drawn up between the student and the doctor and the school or the designee of the school. When this plan is completed, then the parent signs a waiver that releases the school from