

HOUSE No. 5178

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives,

I am returning unsigned House Bill No. 5052, “An Act providing for diabetes management in schools”.

This legislation states that in cases where a student is unable to self-administer glucose monitoring tests or insulin delivery systems, the school nurse can delegate authority to administer these procedures to unlicensed school personnel.

The administration of insulin requires specific dosages that are determined through calculations based on food consumption and blood sugar levels at the moment of administration. Glucose testing also involves a higher skill level to interpret the results and apply them to decision making around food intake, exercise and insulin administration. According to the Institute for Safe Medications (ISMP), insulin has been identified as “high risk,” indicating a heightened risk of significant patient harm when used in error.

Because of this level of complexity and the clinical assessment skills needed, allowing the delegation of insulin administration to unlicensed school personnel would create an unnecessary risk of error which could lead to serious injury or even death for a student with diabetes. In general, the Department of Public Health does not allow school nurses to delegate the administration of medications other than those administered by mouth or topically because of the special training required to administer these medications.

For this reason, I am returning House Bill No. 5052 unsigned.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Baker,
Governor