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**HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY PASSES LEGISLATION TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN ILLINOIS CLASSROOMS FROM DEADLY ALLERGIC REACTION*****Legislation Supported by Attorney General Madigan, Rep. Chris Nybo Heads to Senate***

Springfield — Attorney General Lisa Madigan joined state Rep. Chris Nybo in praising today's passage of critical legislation to protect Illinois school children who suffer from severe allergies. House lawmakers voted 113-0 today to send to the Senate a bill that would allow school nurses in public and private schools throughout Illinois to administer epinephrine auto-injectors, or "epi pens," on students who they believe are suffering from anaphylactic shock, a life-threatening allergic reaction to food or other allergens.

"This bill is a critical step to protecting Illinois children with severe allergies who are at risk of potentially deadly reactions," Attorney General Madigan said. "Allowing schools to have epi pens on hand is a simple yet crucial safety measure that can prevent tragedy."

Madigan said the bill she crafted together with state Rep. Chris Nybo, R-Lombard, would allow a school nurse to administer an epi pen injection for a student believed to be in anaphylactic shock, regardless of whether the student's medical plan on file has indicated an allergy diagnosis. The legislation would also allow schools to keep epi pens for students who are authorized to self-administer the dosage during a reaction, and for students who have a medical plan in place to allow any school personnel to administer the epi pen.

"With so many children, including my own, having serious food allergies, this bill reasonably expands the availability of life-saving medication in our schools," said Rep. Nybo, House sponsor of the legislation. "Kids are obviously around food and other allergens in our schools so having epinephrine more available is a big step forward in helping those students with known and unknown allergies."

Attorney General Madigan and Representative Nybo said the bill addresses an increasing safety need in Illinois classrooms. Studies show that not only are food allergies on the rise among children, but, according to the Journal of Pediatrics, one in four cases of childhood anaphylaxis occur in children who were not previously diagnosed with a food or other severe allergy. The Journal also found that 25 percent of first reactions among children allergic to peanuts or tree nuts occurred while they were in a school setting.

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