

**STATE REPRESENTATIVE
MATTHEW E. BAKER**

PO BOX 202068
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2068
PHONE: (717) 772-5371
FAX: (717) 705-1835

DISTRICT OFFICES:
74 MAIN STREET
WELLSBORO, PA 16901
PHONE: (570) 724-1390
FAX: (570) 724-2168

430 CANTON STREET, SUITE 6
TROY, PA 16947
PHONE: (570) 297-3045
FAX: (570) 297-5551



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL HOUSE MEMBERS

FROM : REPRESENTATIVE MATT BAKER
REPRESENTATIVE MATT SMITH

DATE: 2-16-2011

SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION –
DIABETES MANAGEMENT

In the near future, we will be introducing legislation that would amend the School Code by providing for the management of diabetes while students are in school or at school-related activities.

The care of a student with diabetes requires management 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For students with type I diabetes, and for some with type 2 diabetes, that means monitoring blood glucose (sugar) levels throughout the day and administering insulin therapy. Blood glucose levels that are well-managed help young people avoid short-term complications of blood glucose levels that are too high or too low, stave off the long-term complications of diabetes, and feel better and be more productive at school and at play. Most states allow for trained staff, in addition to a school nurse, to help with everyday and emergency medications.

Our legislation would allow students who are capable of self-managing their diabetes to be permitted to do so. In addition, staff volunteers would be trained in the routine and emergency care needs of students who need assistance with their diabetes management, such as checking blood glucose, administering insulin, or administering glucagon, when a school nurse is not available. The Department of Health would also be required to issue diabetes management guidelines and training modules for schools.

We urge all House members to support this legislation to ensure the safety of diabetic students in the absence of a school nurse. If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Gina Strine at 772-5769 or via email at Gstrine@pahousegop.com.