



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1274

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign Rory Staunton's law, legislation directing the New York State Commissioner of Education to establish rules and regulations for a sepsis awareness and prevention program for schools, and the New York City Department of Education to develop and disseminate a comprehensive sepsis curriculum

By Council Members Dromm, Mendez and Chin

Whereas, Sepsis is a complication caused by the body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to an infection; and

Whereas, Sepsis occurs when chemicals released into the bloodstream to fight a bacterial infection trigger widespread inflammatory responses throughout the body; and

Whereas, This inflammation can trigger changes that can damage multiple organ systems, causing them to fail; and

Whereas, In the worst cases, blood pressure drops and the heart weakens, leading to septic shock and potentially death; and

Whereas, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), sepsis can occur to anyone, at any time, from any type of infection, and can affect any part of the body; and

Whereas, Infants and children are at higher risk and sepsis is most common and most dangerous in older adults or those with weakened immune systems; and

Whereas, According to the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, severe sepsis strikes more than a million Americans every year, and it has been estimated that between 28 and 50 percent of these people die; and

Whereas, Early treatment of sepsis, usually with antibiotics and large amounts of intravenous fluids,

improves chances for survival; and

Whereas, Rory Staunton, a twelve year-old Queens boy, tragically died as a result of sepsis, when the infection went unnoticed by medical staff; and

Whereas, A day after cutting his arm, Rory saw his pediatrician because he was vomiting, feverish, and had pain in his leg, at which point he was sent to the emergency room at NYU Langone Medical Center; and

Whereas, News media indicated that staff of NYU Langone treated and discharged Rory for an upset stomach and dehydration, although it was later determined that he had an infection, which likely entered through the cut in his arm; and

Whereas, According to media reports, it appears that several signs of sepsis were ignored or overlooked, including Rory's mottled skin, his rapid pulse, and his high volume of white blood cells; and

Whereas, He subsequently went into shock and experienced organ failure, and died three days later; and

Whereas, In the wake of this tragedy, Rory's family started the Rory Staunton Foundation to increase awareness of the symptoms of and risks of sepsis; and

Whereas, On January 29, 2013, Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York announced that all hospitals in New York State would be required to adopt evidence-based protocols for the early diagnosis and treatment of sepsis; and

Whereas, These regulations are now known as Rory's Regulations, in honor of Rory Staunton, and New York was the first state in the nation to implement such measures; and

Whereas, Additionally, a campaign called the STOP (Strengthening Treatment and Outcomes for Patients) Sepsis Collaborative was launched by the Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA) and the United Hospital Fund (UHF), which created a data collection tool with a structured checklist to identify and treat sepsis cases in a more standardized way; and

Whereas, "Rory Staunton's law," as proposed by Senator Carl Marcellino and Assemblymember Catherine Nolan, aims to build on recent sepsis education efforts by requiring the New York State

Commissioner of Education to promulgate rules and regulations relating to an ongoing sepsis awareness, prevention and education program; and

Whereas, The regulations would include a model curriculum, lesson plans and instructional resources relating to sepsis awareness and prevention that could be made available to every school district at no cost; and

Whereas, Rory Staunton's law would also require up-to-date instructional tools and materials for schools and libraries developed in collaboration with the New York State Commissioner of Health; and

Whereas, In addition, the Commissioner of Education would be required to issue a guidance memorandum to every school district to inform them of the availability of sepsis awareness and prevention materials and remind school districts of the availability of sepsis materials as part of sepsis awareness month every September; and

Whereas, In September 2015, The Rory Staunton Foundation partnered with Monsignor McClancy High School, a Catholic high school located in Queens, to pilot an education module for high school students examining the science of infectious diseases with a focus on sepsis; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Education (DOE) should ensure that all schools throughout New York City have access to a comprehensive sepsis curriculum; and

Whereas, Raising awareness about sepsis prevention and recognition through outreach and education can help avert another tragedy; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign Rory Staunton's law, legislation directing the New York State Commissioner of Education to establish rules and regulations for a sepsis awareness and prevention program for schools, and the New York City Department of Education to develop and disseminate a comprehensive sepsis curriculum.

