

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release:** July 10, 2007

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## **COUNCIL ENDS PROHIBITION AGAINST SELF-ADMINISTERING ASTHMA MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**

### **D.C. STUDENTS NOW ABLE TO CARRY AND USE INHALERS AT SCHOOL**

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Council unanimously approved the “Student Access to Treatment Emergency Act of 2007,” authored by Councilmember David Catania (At-Large). The law allows District students who suffer from asthma and severe allergies to carry and administer doctor prescribed medication during school hours and at school-sponsored activities. Previously, District students were prohibited from self-administering prescription asthma medication.

“This law corrects a dangerous situation,” said Catania. “District children have some of the highest asthma rates in the country but cannot bring their inhalers to school. The bill that I authored gives our students the security of immediate access to their potentially life-saving medications.”

Over 12,000 children in the District suffer from asthma or severe allergies. Many of these children have attacks while at school or school activities. Delays in treatment aggravate the symptoms of asthma and allergies and frequently lead to the hospitalization of District school children. Last year alone, nearly 900 of the over 8,400 asthma-related visits to school health suites resulted in a District student being taken to the hospital.

Forty-seven states currently allow school children to carry inhalers to treat asthma attacks while in school. Without this legislation, children in the District would continue to remain at risk for serious complications that result from delays in getting emergency treatment. The new law will be in effect during the 2007-08 school year.

For more information, please contact the Office of Councilmember David Catania by calling (202) 724-7772.

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