



Testimony of the New Jersey Library Association
In Support of S2321
Before the
Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee
May 13, 2019

By Patricia Tumulty, NJLA Executive Director

The New Jersey Library Association strongly supports S2321 and wants to thank Senators Cryan and Kean for its introduction.

The tragic opioid crisis has impacted every community in New Jersey. As community facilities, our public libraries have been called upon to act immediately in emergency situations to face this crisis. S2321 is permissive legislation which will allow local library boards of trustees to choose to have opioid antidotes such as Narcan available onsite for administration by trained staff members.

This legislation authorizes the Commissioner of Human Services to establish a grant program to assist public libraries with the costs of purchasing opioid antidotes and the costs associated with providing training to library employees. In addition, this legislation also authorizes the NJ State Librarian to work with the Commissioner of Human Services to identify appropriate entities to provide training to library employees. We strongly support both of these provisions.

The bill provides immunity from liability for public library employees for good faith acts or omissions associated with administering opioid antidotes in an emergency situation. This has been a concern of library employees and we are pleased to see that this legislation addresses that concern.

We also want the Committee to be aware that our libraries have actively been working on the local level to combat this crisis by providing resources to families and community groups looking for additional sources of support.

We urge the Committee to pass this legislation.