

## **National Meningitis Association (NMA) Supports Proposed Legislation For New York Meningococcal Vaccination Requirement**

May 22, 2014 – The National Meningitis Association (NMA) announces its support of recently proposed New York legislation by Senator Kemp Hannon (R-Nassau County), chair of the Health Committee, and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (D-Sullivan County), that would require New York parents to have their children vaccinated against meningococcal disease.

If passed, the bills (S. 7348/A.9347) will require immunizations for sixth graders, with a booster dose for eleventh graders. The requirements align with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendation for an initial meningococcal immunization at age 11-12 with a booster dose at age 16.

“We believe the proposed legislation is a significant step forward in protecting adolescents against this terrible disease,” said NMA President Lynn Bozof. “Research shows adolescents are at increased risk for meningococcal disease, and if passed, this legislation will help protect against the majority of meningococcal disease cases among this age group.”

Meningococcal disease, which is sometimes called bacterial meningitis, can come on quickly and can lead to death or disability within hours. The disease affects persons of all ages in the US, though adolescents and young adults are at increased risk. Vaccination offers the best protection against the disease. Vaccines available in the US protect against four out of five of the major strains of the disease.

“As a father and a meningococcal disease survivor, I urge New York lawmakers to pass this legislation and help protect our children from this devastating disease,” says [Mike LaForgia](#), a Long Island resident who contracted meningococcal disease when he was 40 years old.

### **About NMA**

NMA works to protect families from the potentially devastating effects of meningococcal disease by educating the public, medical professionals and others about the disease and its prevention. The NMA network also provides critical emotional support for families who have been affected by meningococcal disease. Visit NMA at [nmaus.org](http://nmaus.org) or find us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

### **Media Requests**

To speak with an NMA representative or a New York family who has been affected by meningococcal disease, please contact us at [lynn.nma@gmail.com](mailto:lynn.nma@gmail.com) or 678-779-3370 or 212-886-2255.