

STATE SENATOR • JOHN J. GLEASON • 27TH DISTRICT

Gleason Press Release

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Gleason Honored by Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan for Legislative Efforts

Sen. Gleason, Rep. Espinoza receive foundation's "Flame of Hope Award" for legislation to protect epileptics from medication switching

LANSING -Last night, Sen. John Gleason (D-Flushing) was presented with the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan's Flame of Hope Award in recognition of his efforts to protect the health of Michigan residents with epilepsy. Sen. Gleason was honored in the category of Community Leadership for his sponsorship of Senate Bill 926, a bill that would prohibit the switching of anti-epileptic drugs without prior notification by the doctor and patient.

"The best medication for a patient with epilepsy is the one that works for the patient," said Gleason. "Switching a patient's currently prescribed medication, even if it's from a brand name to a generic, puts them at unnecessary risk of having a seizure. My bill would protect the health and safety of more than 100,000 people in Michigan who suffer from epilepsy."

Sen. Gleason received the award along with Rep. John Espinoza (D-Croswell), who introduced House Bill 5077. Espinoza's bill would require a pharmacist to ask for written permission before making a medication change.

The Flame of Hope Award is given to an individual or organization that has shown a commitment of using the community as a resource in communicating the importance of epilepsy awareness and furthering the mission of the foundation, which is "Not another moment lost to seizures." This year is the foundation's 60th anniversary.

"Thousands of people with epilepsy across Michigan are in a daily battle to keep their seizures under control through medications and diet," said Arlene Gorelick, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan's president. "Our Flame of Hope honorees for 2008 have improved the lives of people with epilepsy through their efforts to increase awareness, fund-raising, and patient care, as well as supporting our proposed patient safety legislation to eliminate unauthorized switching of anti-epileptic drugs."

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