

March 6, 2014

Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
U.S Senate  
302 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar,

As educators and advocates of child safety in hurricane states, we write to add our support for your proposed legislation, “Nicholas and Zachary Burt Memorial Carbon Monoxide Poison Prevention Act of 2013,” to help states prevent tragedies involving carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. In hurricane states in the midst and the aftermath of a hurricane, there are so many dangers to cope with, but few consider CO poisoning as one of the risks. When power outages occur during natural disasters like hurricanes, the use of alternative sources of energy and fuel can cause CO to build up inside of a home. Among the most vulnerable are young kids, seniors, and pregnant mothers.

CO is often called the “silent killer” because of its characteristics: an odorless, colorless, and undetectable gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that each year more than 400 Americans die from unintentional CO poisoning. Annually, there are over 20,000 CO-related visits to the emergency room and over 4,000 people are hospitalized. The CDC also found that after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, 98% of all CO-poisoning cases reported involved generator use. Widespread power outages after a hurricane can lead to increased generator use, which produce dangerous amounts of CO when used improperly. Using kerosene lamps for warmth and gas grills for cooking can also increase CO levels inside of a home.

We can reduce illness and death from CO poisoning that occurs after hurricanes and other natural disasters. The most effective way to do so is to install carbon monoxide alarms, especially in the most at risk areas including low-income family homes, childcare facilities, public schools, and senior centers. A study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported that audible electronic CO detectors could have prevented over 50 percent of CO-related deaths. We believe your legislation can help prevent these tragedies from happening.



Below you will find the names of the Safe Kids Coalitions in hurricane states that support the Nicholas and Zachary Burt Memorial Carbon Monoxide Poison Prevention Act of 2013. We applaud you for your leadership in introducing the bill, as well as your past efforts in this regard.

Thank you,



[safekids.org](http://safekids.org)