

**Testimony of The Honorable Laura A. Gillen (NY-04)**

**“Member Day Hearing”**

**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

**Thursday, March 26, 2026**

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to highlight how we can take action together – in a bipartisan way -- to help save lives. As you craft the CJS appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2027, I am here to urge you to include crucial report language to ensure that Byrne JAG funds can be used to implement lifesaving emergency epinephrine programs for law enforcement.

Mr. Chairman, more than 32 million Americans live with life-threatening food allergies and other severe allergic conditions. Anaphylaxis can be triggered by food, insect stings, or medications – things we come into contact every day. In 2013, Giovanni “Gio” Cipriano, a fourteen-year-old boy from Lynbrook, New York, lost his life after suffering a sudden, severe allergic reaction from a snack that contained peanuts. Since losing Gio, his mother, Georgina Cornago, whom I am honored to represent in Congress, has worked tirelessly to help prevent another family from enduring this pain.

She succeeded in passing New York State's Gio's Law in 2019, enabling police departments across the state to carry epinephrine, and, starting with her hometown of Lynbrook, has worked to expand access to police in Nassau, Westchester, and Suffolk County – where last year, cops saved the life of a 72-year-old bee-sting victim suffering a life-threatening allergic reaction — just two days after they started stocking EpiPens in their vehicles.

As you know, our brave police officers are often the first to arrive on the scene in an emergency, and they deserve to have the training and equipment they need to save lives. Today, more police departments across the country are already stepping up to equip their officers with Epi-Pens in their patrol cars. However, these devices can cost up to \$600 per use, which is very costly and can be prohibitive for many smaller departments.

That is why I introduced bipartisan legislation, H.R. 4019, Gios' Law, with my Republican colleague, Chairman Andrew Garbarino, to establish a new federal grant program at the U.S. Department of Justice to equip law enforcement across our country with EpiPens and train officers on how to safely use them.

Today, I am asking you to include report language to allow police departments to use DOJ Byrne JAG funds for training programs to help officers respond when someone is experiencing anaphylaxis, and to purchase the equipment they need to save lives.

Including this language would not require any new spending, but it will help get dollars out the door to law enforcement to enhance public safety. I was proud to lead a bipartisan letter with

Congressman Garbarino and Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, in support of this request.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking for your help, in memory of Gio, to save lives and give our police the tools they need to continue to be heroes in our communities.

Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng, thank you again for your time and your work on this Committee to serve our country and support law enforcement. I look forward to continuing to work with you and colleagues on both sides of the aisle to equip our first responders and enhance public safety. Thank you, and I yield back.