

December 19, 2018

The Honorable Brad Hoylman  
Senator  
State of New York  
Room 413  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Hoylman:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and its physician and student members, we would like to thank you for your letter dated November 29, 2018. We are sorry to hear that your constituents, Tim and Alexis Gembka, lost their daughter, Natasha, to Sudden, Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP). We cannot imagine the devastation and grief they are experiencing.

We appreciate your identifying Orrin Devinsky, MD, Director of the NYU Comprehensive Epilepsy Center and the Saint Barnabas Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery as an expert on SUDEP and his opinion that most hospitals lack policy on the issues surrounding SUDEP. If he is aware of any best practices as it relates to hospital guidelines in this area, we would be happy to collect this information and disseminate to appropriate experts within the AMA and its various sections, councils, etc.

The best contact for Dr. Devinsky is Kai Sternstein, Vice President, Advocacy Resource Center, at [michaela.sternstein@ama-assn.org](mailto:michaela.sternstein@ama-assn.org) or (312) 464-5929. Again, thank you for your outreach. We appreciate your concern and ask that you express our condolences to the Gembka family.

Sincerely,



Barbara L. McAneny, MD  
President



David O. Barbe, MD, MHA  
Immediate Past President

cc: Medical Society of the State of New York