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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOINS VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH IN ANNOUNCING RELEASE OF THE STATE'S FIRST  
COMPREHENSIVE ASTHMA DATA REPORT**

(RICHMOND, Va.)— Taking a breath is becoming increasingly harder for many more Virginians. According to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), asthma is a major public health problem of increasing concern.

On June 14, Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling and VDH will announce the release of the first comprehensive data report on asthma ever published in Virginia. The 2:30 p.m. news conference at Fairfield Court Elementary School in Richmond features Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling, Secretary of Health and Human Services Marilyn Tavenner, Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Billy K. Cannaday and State Health Commissioner Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H.

“Various state agencies, health care organizations and coalitions have been working to bring more attention to this chronic health problem that costs millions of dollars in medical care and hospitalization every year,” said Secretary Tavenner. In Virginia, hospitalizations totaled \$96 million in 2004, a 58 percent increase from 1999. “Many of those hospitalized were children under 5,” said State Health Commissioner, Robert Stroube, M.D., M.P.H.

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways. Symptoms include wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness and nighttime or early morning coughing.

For more information about asthma and the asthma report, visit the VDH Web site at [www.vdh.virginia.gov](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov).

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