

Lauren White
Certified Athletic Trainer
House Bill 47 - Proponent Testimony
21 March 2023

Good afternoon.

Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and Members of the House Health Provider Services Committee - thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on House Bill 47. My name is Lauren White and I currently work as a certified athletic trainer at Taylor High School in Cleves, Ohio.

First off I'd like to personally thank Representative Brown and Representative Bird for introducing the modifications to the Ohio Revised Code with House Bill 47. As the entire world saw during Monday Night Football in January, immediate access to the appropriate care and the rapid use of necessary medical equipment can quite literally save a life. To have people in a position of power working to make real change in our state involving causes as important as this means a great deal to me and to so many others in my line of work.

One of the primary practice domains of athletic training is "Immediate and Emergency Care." As an athletic trainer it is my responsibility to always be prepared and ready to act in case of an emergency. Automatic External Defibrillators [or AEDs as I will now be referring to them] are portable devices that analyze heart rhythm and provide an electrical shock to restore normal rhythm following sudden cardiac arrest. I carry an AED with me at all practices and competitions at our school. We also have multiple AEDs across our school's campus.

In the last two years we have taken our emergency preparedness and really put it at the forefront of our athletics department. In collaboration with University of Cincinnati Health and NovaCare Rehabilitation, we have brought the Take 10 Cincinnati initiative to the Three Rivers Local School District. Take 10 Cincinnati is a program that teaches compression-only CPR and AED awareness. I personally have helped to teach this program to all of our student athletes in grades 9-12, all of our coaches who cover

grades 7-12, our board of education, and all of our teaching staff grades K-12. Take 10 Training does not provide any kind of official certification, but it does provide valuable information and hands-on practice to alleviate the potential hesitation in the general population and encourage people to step forward in case of an emergency and take immediate action.

We choose to say it's not **IF** an emergency event will happen, but **WHEN** it **WILL** happen. *When* an emergency event happens at any of our facilities, I am confident that we are as prepared as possible with the right devices and training to give someone the best chance at survival.

I am prepared. We are prepared within our school district and at our athletics facilities. And I know that across the state of Ohio many schools and recreational facilities are likely also just as prepared. But since the Ohio Revised Code currently only gives recommendations for AED's and emergency action plans to be in place - there are certainly people and places that are not prepared. When it comes to sudden cardiac arrest, every minute that care is delayed and defibrillation is not provided, the likelihood of survival decreases 10%. If there are no life saving devices on-site and individuals are waiting 5, 10, 15 minutes or even more for an ambulance to arrive on scene - it very well might already be too late. It is truly a matter of life and death that House Bill 47 is passed.

It should not be simply suggested that there are AED's on site and readily accessible at our schools and recreational facilities. **It must be required.** It should not be simply suggested that there are Emergency Action Plans in place. **It must be required.** It should not be just a suggestion to continually update and practice Emergency action plans. **It must be required.**

The safety of our children is already taken care of in so many ways within our schools. Schools are **required** to have safety plans detailing specific evacuation and shelter routes in case of a fire or a tornado...so why should schools not also be required to have venue specific emergency action plans detailing the process of what to do when someone goes into cardiac arrest? Schools are **required** to practice fire and tornado

drills a certain amount of times each year...so why are they not also required to have an emergency action plan and practice it multiple times a year?

As I have already mentioned, I am sure many schools and recreational locations already have these emergency action plans and AED's in place, so it's very likely that the Ohio Revised Code's recommendations becoming requirements through House Bill 47 will not come with an overwhelming price-point. However - no matter what the cost may be for these requirements, I believe there is no argument to be made that it is "too expensive" when the alternative is the loss of life.

Members of the committee, I hope you can see that with this bill, we can give a student athlete - a loved one - a better opportunity at survival should they go into cardiac arrest. Every school and every recreational facility should rather have an AED and not need it than need it and not have one. The same applies for an emergency action plan - every school and every recreational facility should have a practiced emergency action plan set in place and never have to actually utilize it rather than be unprepared with no plan in place or no idea how to react when facing an emergency situation.

A LOT of things have to go correctly in order for someone to survive sudden cardiac arrest. None of those things will even have the opportunity to occur unless someone has the ability to act and take the necessary steps within the first several minutes of collapse. In 2023 - with all we know about sudden cardiac death and the importance of AED's - there is no excuse for a school or recreational facility to not have a formal, practiced emergency action plan or easily accessible AEDs on site. It is past time for us to update the Ohio Revised Code with the changes laid out in House Bill 47. We cannot just continue to suggest that schools and recreational facilities have AED's and emergency action plans. These things are necessities and having them will provide the opportunity to have the best outcome for everyone involved in an emergency situation.

Thank you all for your time and for allowing me to provide testimony today. I am available to answer any questions that you may have at this time.