



**Representative Richard D. Brown**  
House District 5

Senate Health Committee, Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 47  
October 11, 2023

Thank you Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, and Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee for hearing sponsor testimony today regarding HB 47, a bill that, if passed into law, will save lives.

My joint sponsor, Rep. Bird, and I are pleased to bring HB 47 for your consideration today. It modifies ten existing sections of the ORC, known as Lindsey’s Law, which concerns “Sudden Cardiac Arrest” (SCA), and enacts new section 3701.851.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, “sudden cardiac arrest is an emergency in which your heart suddenly stops beating. An electrical issue makes your heart stop pumping blood. This leaves your cells unable to receive the oxygen they need. Because of the lack of oxygen to your cells, sudden cardiac arrest can turn fatal in just minutes.” I am sure the Chair and Vice-Chair of this committee, as physicians, are well-aware of the potential deadly effects of untreated SCA.

This issue was originally brought to me by a constituent, a self-described “soccer mom,” who, after traveling the state with her son for soccer tournaments, noted the absence of any AEDs in many of the sports and recreation locations where these organized tournaments occurred. Every year some high school aged or younger athletes die from SCA on the field of play or on practice fields.

I also received a letter from another constituent who told me of her brother’s death 8 years ago from SCA at a practice of his high school football team. He had an undiagnosed heart

condition and never had any symptoms before his sudden death. She wrote, “I wish there would have been an AED readily available at his practice to save his life.”

And just this past July 7, a 15 year old Worthington High School freshman collapsed during soccer practice, suffering from sudden cardiac arrest. Coaches quickly came to his aid, finding no pulse, and no observable breathing. Within a minute or so the head soccer coach began administering CPR. Another coach ran to get an AED from inside the school and the AED was quickly employed to shock the heart back into a normal rhythm. The young man’s life was saved by the prompt and heroic action of these coaches. But his life would not have been saved without the presence and use of an AED. Unfortunately, these types of emergency events happen too frequently around Ohio.

SCA can be effectively treated if an automated external defibrillator (AED), often combined with CPR, is utilized within 5 minutes of the SCA. For every minute SCA is left untreated, survival declines by 7-10%. An AED is a device that analyzes heart rate and calculates what electric shock, if any, is needed to establish a consistent working rhythm in the heart of the SCA victim.

SCA is the leading cause of sudden death in young athletes, but it can affect anyone, including highly trained professional athletes like Damar Hamlin of the Buffalo Bills, whose SCA incident at the Bills-Bengals game in January of this year has brought this issue to national attention.

Under current law, Ohio schools are merely encouraged, but not required, to have an AED on site and to implement an emergency action plan (EAP) regarding medical emergencies and the use of AEDs. This statutory encouragement has resulted in the vast majority of Ohio schools purchasing AEDs (over 90%), so the bill is intended to spur the remaining small number of schools to get on board. Also, Ohio’s “sports and recreation locations” are similarly not required under current Ohio law to have an AED or an EAP on site. HB 47 will require that all schools in Ohio and certain sports and recreation locations controlled by a political subdivision where an organized sporting event is taking place, have an AED onsite for use during a medical

emergency. HB 47 limits application of its requirements for municipally owned or operated “sports and recreation locations” to townships and villages with a population greater than 5,000 people. So, HB 47 only applies to about 13% of Ohio townships, the largest ones.

HB 47 also requires schools to provide training in the use of AEDs to teachers, principals, coaches, athletic trainers, and other persons supervising interscholastic athletics, and, gives schools the discretion to provide training to any other school employees they may deem appropriate to receive training.

HB 47 further requires the Ohio Department of Health to develop a model EAP regarding the use of AEDs, and requires schools to adopt an EAP, either using the model EAP developed by the DOH, or using one they have developed themselves.

House Bill 47 is supported by the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology, the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Surgeons, the Ohio Athletic Trainers Association, the NFL, the Smart Heart Sports Coalition, schools, and major hospitals around the state. Additionally, both the Cincinnati Bengals and Cleveland Browns have provided us with correspondence expressing their “strong support” for HB 47. The letters state that if HB 47 passes, then “Ohio can apply the same life-saving standards that proved so effective during Monday Night Football in January to our young people all year round.”

This is crucial, commonsense legislation. The question is not *if* a student may experience sudden cardiac arrest, the question is *when*. AEDs are safe, easy to operate, and are literal life-savers. If these devices are important enough to have in the hallways of legislators' offices and to be readily available for our pro athletes, then they are important enough to have in our kids' schools and at certain sports and recreation locations where our kids play organized sports.

Passage of HB 47 will allow Ohio to help lead the way on AED use and to save the lives of students across the state.

Thank you.