

Good Morning, Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee.

My name is TJ Carrie, founder of the TJ Carrie Foundation.

Thank you for inviting us today as we discuss an initiative that holds immense significance for me and the other members of the Smart Heart Sports Coalition. As a proud member of this coalition, I am honored to stand before you to shed light on the importance of prioritizing the adoption of policies that will prevent high school student-athletes from fatal outcomes from sudden cardiac arrest across the country.

For far too long, heart-related issues have plagued our communities, impacting many. The Smart Heart Sports Coalition was established with a single-minded focus—to raise awareness and implement preventive measures.

I personally had open heart surgery at the age of 15 years old, and this surgery changed my life in so many ways. But it was because of the preventative measures that allowed me to play my collegiate career at Ohio University, nine years in the National Football League, and continuously live out the dream of accomplishing many great things.

The Smart Heart Sports Coalition will actively collaborate with leading medical institutions, renowned experts, and scientists to drive groundbreaking research projects. In that same regard, we are here to work with state legislators who can be partners in this effort. Ohio is my state, and these are my legislators, so this is a unique opportunity to bring my lived experiences and expertise to them to have their ear on this important subject. But we cannot do this alone. The success of the Smart Heart Sports Coalition hinges on the collective efforts of the entire community.

The Smart Heart Sports Coalition is not just an initiative; it is a commitment—a commitment to our Community.

We stand before you today, urging the Ohio Senate to pass HB 47 as soon as possible.

Thank you.