

Senate Health Committee

In Support of H.B. 47, Ensuring Access to Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in Schools

Wednesday, December 6th, 2023

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking member Antonio, and esteemed members of the Senate Health Committee,

My name is Kanny S. Grewal, and I am a practicing cardiologist at OhioHealth Riverside Hospital here in Columbus, and the President of the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology (ACC). I am here today on behalf of the Ohio Chapter of the ACC, to advocate for your support of HB 47. I represent over 2000 cardiovascular clinicians who tirelessly serve patients in diverse healthcare settings across our great state, and we are grateful for the opportunity to present our testimony on this vital piece of legislation.

The Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology fervently endorses HB 47, a commendable initiative sponsored by Representatives Brown and Bird.

Every year, more than 23,000 children under 18 experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital in the United States, and an alarming 40% of these cases are sports related. As a cardiologist who treats these patients, I understand that the causes of sudden death are varied and numerous, and most of these children have never had previous symptoms or testing. Thus, early treatment of an arrest with an AED is the most effective strategy to increase survival. HB 47 addresses this critical issue by significantly enhancing survival rates through meticulous planning and fostering a robust chain of survival.

This proposed legislation would place automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) and require action plans on how to use them; in public and chartered nonpublic schools along with local sports and recreation locations in Ohio. The potential impact of HB 47 is profound—it has the power to save lives and cultivate a safer environment for students, coaches, and spectators alike.

The formulation and execution of an emergency action plan are paramount. Also, it is important to require an annual review and evaluation of the emergency action plan. With millions of students and staff in public schools across our state, having a comprehensive plan in place to address cardiac arrest is not just advisable but imperative.

Tragedies unfold when young athletes experience sudden cardiac events during school sporting events. In these critical moments, the presence of an AED and trained staff is indispensable. Studies have shown that in schools equipped with AEDs, approximately 85% of children survive cardiac arrest.

I urge the Committee to advance HB 47 so that no more lives are needlessly lost. Let us collectively contribute to creating a safer and more prepared environment within our schools, ensuring the well-being of our youth.

Sincerely,

Kanny S. Grewal, MD

President, Ohio Chapter, American College of Cardiology