



**Sami Rifat, MD, FAMSSM, FACSM**

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**TESTIMONY REGARDING OHIO HB 47**

Statement for the Record

**Sami F Rifat MD, FAMSSM, FACSM**

Director, Primary Sports Medicine  
Cleveland Clinic

Committee on Health  
Ohio State Senate  
December 6, 2023

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 47 to require emergency action plans and automated external defibrillators in schools (AEDs).

I am Dr. Sami Rifat, Director of Primary Sports Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic. As a Sports and Exercise Medicine Physician with 30 years of experience my career has afforded me the opportunity to care for athletes of all ages and abilities and I can unequivocally state that AEDs save lives. One of the most common emergencies faced by student athletes is sudden cardiac arrest and sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death among student-athletes in the United States. Seconds count and rapid access to AEDs in Ohio schools are key to survival. In the event of cardiac arrest, survival rates decrease about 10 percent per minute that elapse before an electrical shock is applied.

While rapid access to AEDs in our schools is key, they should be implemented as a part of a thorough and rehearsed Emergency Action Plan (EAP). As a former Medical Director of one of the nation's largest and most successful Division I Collegiate athletic programs, I can attest that preparing for an emergency is essential to ensure the safety of the student athlete on the field, court, and training environment. EAPs can be implemented in many different emergency situations and when rehearsed, decrease the potential for wasted time and unorganized response in an emergency. A good EAP should be simple enough for everyone to follow, but specific enough for every member of the team to be effective in responding to an emergency.

I believe HB 47 will help protect the health and safety of Ohio student athletes by requiring schools to develop emergency action plans, including the placement of AEDs in schools. Providing these vital tools and training to coaches, teachers, and students will increase the chances of survival in the event of sudden cardiac arrest and other emergencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these written comments. I sincerely appreciate the Committee's leadership on this issue. Please feel free reach out to me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sami F. Rifat', written in a cursive style.

Sami F. Rifat, MD, FAMSSM, FACSM