

This testimony is to express the strong support of the American Red Cross for HB47, your legislation which will require schools in Ohio to have AEDs at sporting facilities, ensure that staff are trained in use of AEDs as well as implementing a cardiac emergency response plan (CERP).

We have all heard about tragedies that occur when a young athlete has a sudden cardiac arrest event during a school sporting event or practice. These can be caused by an undetected heart defect or, as was highlighted recently in the case of NFL player Damar Hamlin, a blow to the chest in between heartbeats. When these events occur, it is critical to have an AED present, and to have staff who are trained in CPR and AED use on site. This ensures the best chance of survival.

Your legislation requiring AEDs at school sporting events and practices, along with having trained personnel at these events and an emergency response plan will save lives throughout your state.

The Red Cross appreciates and supports the efforts of you and your fellow Ohio legislators in ensuring that our student-athletes and other students have the best opportunity to survive sudden cardiac arrest by placing AEDs, training staff and requiring an emergency response plan that is practiced. Preparedness like this what the Red Cross encourages in all communities and we support this legislation as a way to make Ohio more resilient and better prepared.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to working with you as your legislation moves forward.

## **Additional Talking Points:**

- Nearly 90% of cardiac arrests that occur out of the hospital are fatal.
- Only about 40% of people who suffer a cardiac arrest get the immediate help they need before emergency responders arrive.
- It is estimated that there are more than 23,000 children under the age of 18 who experience cardiac arrests outside of a hospital each year in the United States.
- Almost 40% of these are sports-related.
- Cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death for student athletes.
- Survival more than doubles when people nearby call 911, start CPR and use a publicly-available AED (automated external defibrillator) compared to waiting for emergency responders to arrive.
- In schools with AEDs, approximately 70% of children survive cardiac arrest – seven times the overall survival rate for children.
- Cardiac emergency response plans (CERPs) can increase sudden cardiac arrest survival rates by 50% or more by enabling a trained lay-responder team to take action.
- CERPs can be stand-alone guidelines or merged with a school's existing medical emergency response plans or emergency action plans.
- The safety of students, school staff and visitors can be enhanced with a coordinated, practiced response plan where school CERP teams feel empowered to administer lifesaving care until EMS arrives.