



**American  
Heart  
Association®**

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Chair, Ohio AHA State Advocacy Committee  
HB 445 - Proponent testimony  
Ohio House Transportation & Public Safety Committee

Good morning. Thank you, Chair Baldrige, Vice-Chair McClain, and Ranking Member Sheehy, for the opportunity to support HB 445 – the Next Generation 9-1-1 legislation. I have been an advocate for the American Heart Association (AHA) for the last 33 years and have enjoyed many roles with the organization, including being a Central Ohio Board member, having various community leadership roles, and as an avid spokesperson. Currently, I am the Chair of the State Advocacy Committee, a 9-member committee that helps to develop policy priorities and provide an advocate voice across the state. For 97 years, the AHA has been funding cardiovascular medical research, educating consumers on healthy living, and working to reduce disability and deaths caused by cardiovascular disease and stroke.

What would you do if a loved one collapsed? You'd likely call 9-1-1 and assume that the dispatcher would assist you in providing CPR, right?

However, that's not always the case. In Ohio, not all 9-1-1 dispatchers are required to be Emergency Medical Dispatch certified, which would require training to provide CPR instructions to callers. Currently, the state has a conglomeration of emergency communication districts, each with varying levels of requirements to implement CPR instructions – this bill would change that.

I personally know the benefits of CPR. When I was 32 years old, without symptoms or any warning, I collapsed at work and suffered a cardiac arrest event. At the time I worked at NBC 4, a TV station here in Columbus. My co-workers came together to administer CPR until medics arrived. My station general manager had offered CPR training to the entire staff 6 months prior to my cardiac arrest. Thankfully, I had a building full of people who knew what to do and they acted. Only 10% of people who

suffer sudden cardiac arrest live. I am one of the lucky and blessed statistics.

Since that time, I have worked to promote the benefits of CPR to save lives. That's why I'm so excited about HB 445. This bill gives more people a second chance at life when CPR is administered and done quickly. No matter how fast medics get to the scene, it is imperative to get CPR started immediately - before medics arrive. Time is critical to saving a life.

If a bystander called 911 and an emergency operator could instruct them on how to perform hands-only CPR, more lives would be saved. While hands-only CPR is very easy, people may be hesitant to take charge or fear they won't do CPR correctly so they do nothing at all. A calming voice of a 911 operator with specific instructions could give someone the confidence they need to perform CPR.

The American Heart Association has been working with the Ohio 9-1-1 Program Office, the State ESINet Steering Committee, and other stakeholders to help implement a statewide overhaul of the 9-1-1 system called NextGen 9-1-1. This policy would include Telecommunicator CPR (T-CPR), a policy that would ensure Ohio's 9-1-1 operators be trained in high-quality telephone cardiopulmonary resuscitation and be able to provide detailed instructions over the phone to someone assisting a victim during out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

The AHA would like to thank Reps. Carfagna and Kent Smith for their work on this legislation. As well as Rob Jackson and his team at the Ohio 9-1-1 Program Office. In addition, we appreciate the insight and expertise of the state's local officials and 911 offices. We are happy to be a part of the conversations for standardizing and improving the delivery of high-quality T-CPR instructions by 9-1-1 operators. We know this will help save lives in Ohio.

This legislation will provide a substantial update of current standards for 9-1-1 operators. We're excited that the new proposed legislation will require 9-1-1 operators to be certified in CPR and to provide pre-arrival medical care instructions to the caller.

Thank you for your consideration of the legislation before you today.