



March 20, 2023

Chairman Al Cutrona
Ohio House of Representatives
Health Provider Services Committee

Chair Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Health Provider Services Committee:

My name is Naomi Kertesz. I am a pediatric electrophysiologist which means I am a cardiac electrician. I evaluate and children who are at risk for life threatening arrhythmias as well as those who have experienced life-threatening arrhythmias at Nationwide Children's Hospital. I have been in practice for 25 years. In addition, I am the Medical Director of Project Adam Ohio, an organization dedicated to providing public access defibrillation. Thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony in support of HB 47.

Sudden cardiac arrest is the most common cause of sudden death in the United States. As Damar Hamlin showed us, even those in excellent health are at risk for a sudden cardiac arrest. What most people don't know is that sudden cardiac arrest is more common in nonathletes. Victims of sudden cardiac arrest are more likely to survive if they receive prompt support and treatment. The single greatest factor in determining survival of an arrest is the time from arrest which could like a simple faint, to the use of an AED. You have five minutes from the time the child faints until you restore normal rhythm to not only save their life but prevent brain damage.

Dresner¹ et al, looked at sudden cardiac arrest in young athletes, <30 years, over two years. 93% of the arrests were witnessed. High school athletes accounted for the majority of cases with middle schoolers being in second place. The overall survival was 48% These were witnessed arrests. The survival overall was 49%, if CPR was performed 63% survived, in cases where an onsite AED was used 89% survived.

Lindsay's Law was a great first step by requiring education for all those participating in sports to be educated on sudden cardiac arrest and possible warning signs. Fortunately, many schools in Ohio have AEDs in the building. I and others thought that would be enough. But it isn't. I have now seen multiple cases where a child has arrested at school, where an AED was present, but no one used it. Why? Because individuals didn't know where it was or didn't feel comfortable in using. The only thing you need to know to use an AED is to turn it on. It tells you what to do.

Schools are required to run a fire drill every month though the last time a child died in a school fire was in the 1950s. The last time a student had a sudden cardiac arrest in Ohio was this year. I ask that you require a sudden cardiac arrest drill yearly. This will make sure there is a group of adults in the school who can respond to any individual, child, or adult, who suffers a sudden cardiac arrest. They will know where the AED is and feel comfortable using it. Nationwide Children's Hospital as well as other Project Adam affiliates, will provide training to any school district for free as well as assist in running a drill. It takes 15 minutes to run a drill.

I plead with you to require the education needed to enable all schools to successfully use their AEDs so I don't have to take care of children who suffer irreversible consequences because the AED on the wall wasn't used.

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1. Drezner JA, Peterson DF, Siebert DM, Thomas LC, Lopez-Anderson M, Suchsland MZ, Harmon KG, Kucera KL. Survival After Exercise-Related Sudden Cardiac Arrest in Young Athletes: Can We Do Better? *Sports Health*. 2019 Jan/Feb;11(1):91-98. doi: 10.1177/1941738118799084. Epub 2018 Sep 11. PMID: 30204540; PMCID: PMC6299352.