

Committees:

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**Representative Adam C. Bird
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**Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 47
Before the House Committee on Health Provider Services
March 7, 2023**

Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and Members of the House Health Provider Services committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 47, requiring automated external defibrillators, hereby referred to as AEDs, in schools.

House Bill 47 will require, rather than permit, that all school districts, community schools, STEM schools, college-preparatory boarding schools, and chartered nonpublic schools have an AED on site. While we are confident that a large majority of our school districts do have AEDs on sight, we believe that by requiring that each school has an AED, and provides training on AEDs, we can help protect the lives of our students.

According to the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the chances of survival from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) decrease by 7-10% for each minute without immediate CPR or defibrillation, and after 10 minutes, resuscitation rarely succeeds. Each passing second is crucial when it comes to saving a life, having an AED on sight allows a trained staff member to begin resuscitation and increase chance of survival, while waiting for EMS.

In addition to schools, this bill requires the controlling authorities of municipal sports and recreation locations to place an AED in each location under their control. As you know, many school and community regulated sports occur outdoors, or take place in a venue entirely separate from a school building. Baseball fields, soccer fields, football stadiums and many other arenas are in a location where access to the school's AED is highly and sometimes entirely limited. When a child is suffering from SCA, each minute is crucial, therefore the time it takes to sprint back to a locked school building, locate the AED, and return can easily be a matter of life or death.

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We have worked together with LSC to carefully define “sports and recreation locations” as indoor recreation centers and facilities, gymnasiums, swimming pools, and playing fields. These playfields are not limited to those supervised by school buildings, but also includes municipal corporations, townships and counties that oversee official regulated athletic activities.

The bill also requires that the Department of Health develop a model emergency action plan for the use of AEDs that schools can adopt to fulfill the bill’s requirement of an emergency action plan. In addition to the requirement of an emergency action plan, this legislation requires training in the use of AEDs for teachers, principals, administrative employees, coaches, athletic trainers, and supervisors of interscholastic athletics.

While this may seem like a multitude of changes, it is important to remember that most of our school districts already have an AED in schools and require training on the AED. In addition, most of our school districts have developed an emergency action plan. However, after the recent event with Buffalo Bills player Damar Hamlin and the passing of a 17 year old boy in my district who suffered from Sudden Cardiac Arrest during school, I feel that requiring this safety device is of the utmost importance to protect our children.

Chairman Cutrona and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important piece of lifesaving legislation today. My joint sponsor, Representative Brown and I are happy to answer questions.