



Proponent Testimony HB 47
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December 6, 2023

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of House Bill 47. My name is Marie Schaefer, MD, and I am a sports medicine physician and President-Elect of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland and Northern Ohio, or AMCNO.

The AMCNO, founded in 1824, is the region's professional medical association and the oldest professional association in Ohio. We are a non-profit 501(c)6 representing physicians and medical students from all the contiguous counties in Northern Ohio. We are proud to be the stewards of Cleveland's medical community of the past, present, and future.

The mission of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio is to support physicians in being strong advocates for all patients and promote the practice of the highest quality of medicine. On behalf of our 6,700 members and their patients, I ask you to support HB 47 to require the placement of automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in schools and municipal sports and recreation locations and modify training requirements related to AEDs in public and chartered nonpublic schools.

An AED, or automated external defibrillator, is a medical device used to resuscitate those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest that delivers an electrical shock, or defibrillation, to help the heart re-establish an effective rhythm. According to the American Red Cross, sudden cardiac arrest is among the leading causes of death in the United States. More than 350,000 people suffer a cardiac arrest each year. And while most sudden cardiac deaths are in older adults, particularly those with heart disease, according to the Mayo Clinic, sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death in young athletes.

In my time as a fellowship-trained Sports Medicine Physician, I have served as a team physician for athletes at the recreational, scholastic, and professional level. I am also the head team physician at Cleveland State University, where I am responsible for medical clearance for athletic participation of 400 student-athletes. Through those roles, I have seen firsthand the risk of sudden cardiac arrest.

As do my sports medicine and primary care colleagues, I make medical clearance decisions on several student-athletes each year that have either a personal history of cardiovascular disease or carry familial risk factors. Working with our team of sports cardiologists, we also identify student-athletes through the pre-participation screening process with previously unknown heart conditions. Despite following all appropriate pre-participation screening processes, sudden cardiac death is the leading cause of death in student-athletes. It is unexpected, terrifying, and requires the presence of an AED to save that person's life.

Mandating the presence of an AED will also save lives beyond athletes. A referee at a women's basketball game at John Carroll University in Cleveland on January 19, 2022, suffered a heart attack when coming out of the locker room at half time. This occurred in the presence of an AED as well as CPR-trained medical personnel, who ultimately saved his life.

HB 47 also requires, rather than permits, each public and chartered nonpublic school and youth sports organization, before each athletic season, to hold an informational meeting regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest for student and youth athletes. These informational sessions will help promote awareness of sudden cardiac arrest in youth athletes and help protect public health. We are also proud to join other partners supporting this legislation including the American Health Association and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.

It is for all these reasons that we stand in support of HB 47. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.