



The For Elysa Foundation

House Education Committee Proponent Testimony on HB 2659

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Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 2659.

This legislation aims to educate students, parents, and coaches on the vital warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that 2,000 children die every year from SCA. It is the leading cause of death of student athletes. However, the exact number is not well established, and is likely even higher.

Post-viral myocarditis is a well-documented cause of SCA in athletes. With the COVID-19 pandemic, cases of post-viral myocarditis have increased significantly, with data translating to a risk of myocarditis that is more than 30 times higher among COVID-19 patients. Thus, the concern for SCA in student athletes is even greater at this current time.

As a physical therapist and mother of a child who suffered SCA as a result of viral myocarditis at 2 years of age, this bill is very important to me, my family, my patients, and the children in our community.

This bill contains several main points, all related to education and awareness:

- 1) State Department of Education will develop and publish guidelines and materials to educate students, parents, and coaches about the nature and warning signs of SCA
- 2) Students and parents will acknowledge receipt and review of this material annually
- 3) Schools may hold an informational meeting regarding the same
- 4) Provisions are made for care of any student who passes out or faints during athletic activity, requiring clearance from an appropriate medical professional prior to returning to play
- 5) Coaches will attend an annual SCA training course

Knowledge is power, and arming our students, parents, and coaches with the knowledge of warning signs of SCA as well as basic measures to protect student athletes across the entire state of Kansas is vital to improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important bill.