



2401 Gillham Road
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To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Lindsey Malloy Walton DO, MPH, FAAP
Date: March 18, 2024
Re: Oral Proponent Testimony on Sub for HB 2494

Dear Chair Baumgardner, Vice Chair Erickson, Ranking Minority Member Sykes, and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2494, relating to cardiac emergency response plans in schools. As a Pediatric Electrophysiologist (cardiologist specializing in heart rhythm abnormalities) at Children's Mercy Hospital-Kansas City, with over 10 years of experience practicing in Missouri and Kansas, I want to emphasize the critical importance of addressing sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) in our schools.

Approximately 20 percent of a community, including students, teachers, staff, and family members, is present in our schools on any given day. This statistic highlights the vital role that schools play in the overall safety and well-being of our communities.

Heart disease is now the leading cause of death in the United States, underscoring the urgency of legislation like HB 2494. Sudden cardiac death, particularly in the context of heart disease, is a significant contributor to overall mortality. Alarming, even youth are not immune to this risk: studies indicate a notable incidence of sudden cardiac death in children, ranging from 1 to 8.3 deaths per 100,000 youth annually.

As a provider actively involved in the care of children following sudden cardiac arrest, I have witnessed the impact of timely interventions firsthand. According to the American Heart Association, the average survival rate for out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest is 10.6 percent. Unfortunately, every minute of delayed defibrillation results in a ten percent decrease in survival rates. Swift and effective response measures, like cardiac emergency response plans, are essential for saving lives.

In addition to my role as a Pediatric Electrophysiologist at Children's Mercy Hospital, I serve as the Medical Director for the Kansas City metro area chapter of Project ADAM, a national organization dedicated to providing cardiac emergency response readiness education. Project ADAM recognizes the significance of timely CPR and automated external defibrillator (AED) use in improving outcomes after sudden cardiac arrest.

Having a comprehensive cardiac emergency response plan in place, coupled with proper education and training, are crucial for ensuring the safety of our children and communities. Sub for HB 2494 would dramatically improve the chances of survival for youth experiencing SCA in schools.



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Your consideration of Sub for HB 2494 aligns with bipartisan, commonsense efforts to protect the health and well-being of our schools and communities. I believe the proposed legislation, with its focus on training school personnel, placement of AEDs, and implementation of cardiac emergency response plans, will serve as a vital step in creating a safer environment within our schools.

Having witnessed the tragic outcomes when appropriate and timely interventions are lacking, I strongly urge you to support Sub for HB 2494. This legislation has the potential to be a lifesaving measure, making a significant difference in the event of sudden cardiac arrest within our school settings.

Thank you for your dedication to the safety and well-being of our children and communities.

Lindsey Malloy Walton DO, MPH, FAAP

Children's Mercy Hospital-Kansas City