

To the Public Health Committee regarding Senate Bill 1339 An Act Requiring AEDS

What does 1 in a million mean to you? One in a million did not mean anything to me until the last couple of months. What is one in a million? One in a million is the chances that I had to survive on August 24, 2006, the day that I went into cardiac arrest.

My name is Mike Papale and these are my parents, Michael and Joan Papale. I am very fortunate to be a cardiac arrest survivor. We are here today, to explain to you about the importance of having a defibrillator in all recreation centers and health facilities in our state.

I woke up that morning like any normal morning. My brother and I went to work out with our friend at Choate Rosemary Hall, a prep school in Wallingford. We worked out for about an hour and a half that morning before we went to our father's basketball camp where my brother was a referee and I was a coach. I walked into the Recreation Department, where the camp was held, and changed my shirt before work. That is all I remember of the day I almost died. The only information that I know about that day is from what I have been told. Later that morning, I was sitting on a bench and watching a game when I slumped over onto the ground. People thought I was joking around or I was overheated. Little did they know, it was much worse. My best friend and my brother both witnessed me collapsing. My father was in the gym within seconds watching his son gasping for his potential final breaths. The feeling of having no control over a situation like this is something that all parents dread. My family will now live with this trauma for the rest of our lives. The children were rushed out of the gym and 911 was called. The recreation center did not have a defibrillator. I was lucky that my hero, Bob Huebner was working next door and for some reason had his pager on that day. He gave me CPR and revived me until the EMT staff arrived at the scene with an external defibrillator. I was then shocked with the defibrillator and my heart finally started beating normally again. The recreation center now has a defibrillator. I do not remember anything for four days after I collapsed. I spent a long 14 days in intensive care at the Connecticut Children's Medical Hospital here in Hartford and was diagnosed with a heart condition called Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy. I currently have an implanted defibrillator. I was once a New Haven Register All- Area Basketball player and now I am not longer able to play the game I love. I take two heart pills everyday and go to checkups in Hartford and in Boston to see different doctors about my condition. Other than that, I am a normal high school senior who is very fortunate to have his life. If one thing may have gone wrong on that day, I may not have been standing in front of you at this time.

Although my family and I have called Mr. Huebner our hero, if I had never been shocked with the defibrillator, I would not be here today. I am sure you are wondering how I am one in a million when you here about athletes who survive from cardiac arrest in the news. The reason my odds

were so low is because the recreation center did not have a defibrillator at the time of my arrest. It took nearly 20 minutes before I got shocked by the defibrillator. If the recreation center had a defibrillator and trained staff I could have been shocked in less than one minute which would have given me a 90% chance of survival or in less than 5 minutes would have given me a 50% chance of survival. Instead my family and I have learned that statistics say that I should not have made it that day. I feel that there is a reason that everything ran smoothly that day. It is now our mission in life to make people like you aware that the unexpected can occur to anyone as we harshly learned. Instead of waiting for the worst to happen, like the Recreation Department in Wallingford did, we need to be prepared for the worst. If a 95- year old man drops, or if a 17-year old athlete drops, we need to be ready.

We are standing here today, not to make you feel bad for us, but instead to save someone's life. Our family had one of the most horrific traumas imaginable this past summer and we do not want this to happen to another family. We could get up here and list off a bunch of prices for the cost of each defibrillator and how much it will cost to train staff members, but how could anyone put the price on saving a person's life? It would be a very fortunate situation if these defibrillators never had to be used, but if the unimaginable does occur we need to be ready.

I would now like to hand the microphone over to my mother who will read to you some of her experiences and so you can learn more about these life-saving devices.

Thank you,

Michael Papale, Wallingford, CT