

Good Morning Members of the Committee

Attachment: *Am
Life*

My name is Catherine DiMeola and I live in Tolland. Tolland is a Heart Safe Community as designated by the Department of Public Health in January 2007.

Tolland has over 40 AED's in our community and I am here today in support of HB No. 687 *An Act Concerning Automatic External Defibrillators*. I urge you to vote in favor of this life saving Bill. The stated purpose: To establish requirements and immunity for the use of automated external defibrillators in health clubs and athletic facilities of institutions of higher education.

My full time job is teaching lay responders and by-standers, in businesses and industry and in our communities to strengthen the Cardiac Chain of Survival, to help extend the life of another human being.

We have successes, clearly those successes are directly related to trained bystanders who recognize Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) and who are willing to help by calling 911, immediately begin CPR and using to an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). Time is crucial, for every minute that passes with out a life saving shock, the victim loses a 7 – 10 % chance of survival, and therefore public access to the AED is an essential link to survival.

In an article published in *Circulation* The Journal of the American Heart Association, January 14, 2008 titled Reducing Barriers for Implementation of Bystander-Initiated CPR the author recommends 'Government agencies at the local, state and federal level provide CPR education'. This training should be part of a comprehensive community lay rescuer AED program. When AED's are placed where the public has access to them, such as community lay responder AED programs, survival rates from SCA have been reported as high as 49% to 74%. In various studies over the past 15 years survival without an AED is a dismal 1.4 % to 2%.

HB No. 687, Sec. 1 and Sec 2. supports this recommendation by requiring AED's in Health Clubs and the Athletic Department of an institution of higher education where trained staff will have the ability to save lives. In the last 3 months of 2007, a 56-year-old man and a 58-year-old man are alive today because the Health Club (in Massachusetts) had a comprehensive AED program where AED's are readily accessible to the staff and public and well trained staff. Your support of this bill will allow that to happen in Ct.

The article also noted fear of legal liability as a barrier, bystanders were not aware of the Good Samaritan Laws and companies were fearful as the GSL's did not specifically address that entity. The article recommends information about GSL be included in all CPR training programs and materials posted prominently near AED installations. HB No. 687, Sec 3 (a) provides language that includes 'a person or entity...' will not be held liable. I urge your support of this section so that business and industry will embrace the concepts of Heart Safe Workplace, Harvard University provides and excellent model of this concept.

Lastly, the article recommends a process for continuous quality improvement. CPR instructional programs should always include an objective CPR quality assessment for certification. Each entity purchasing AED's needs to thoroughly research the market and seek advice from their local EMS. An AED manufacturer must be capable of proving consistent reliability, ease and safety of operation, technical and customer support, moral integrity and financial stability.

Thank you for your time and support of this important Bill. If you have any question, I will be happy to answer them.

Respectfully Submitted;
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Cardiac Science Corporation
New England Region Educator/Service Representative

Cardiac Science is at the Heart of saving lives. The Cardiac Science vision is to be the company the global community thinks of first for high-quality products and services when it comes to saving lives.