



Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Paul Shipman. I am Senior Director of Communications and Government Relations for the Charter Oak Chapter of the American Red Cross, representing the American Red Cross Chapters of Connecticut in expressing our support for passage of S.B. 1089, AN ACT CONCERNING AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS

More than 300,000 Americans suffer from sudden cardiac arrest each year and less than 10 percent of them will survive.

Prompt administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) can help. But CPR cannot restart a heart by itself. In more than two-thirds of all cardiac arrests, an electric shock, known as defibrillation, is needed. Studies show that prompt CPR followed by early defibrillation can reduce death from sudden cardiac arrest. The links in the cardiac chain of survival include early activation of the emergency medical system (EMS); prompt CPR; early defibrillation; and advanced cardiac life support (post-incident care provided in a hospital setting). Weakness in any link lessens the chance of survival.

By enacting legislation to support the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and by increasing the number of individuals that are trained to respond, the survival rate can be increased significantly. Some studies indicate early CPR and defibrillation can double survival rates for sudden cardiac arrest that occurs outside hospital settings.

Based on the facts above, it is clear that increased availability of AEDs in public places will save lives. Health clubs and schools are two excellent examples of places that would make a life-saving difference by having AEDs on site. Health clubs have high concentrations of people engaging in strenuous physical activity. Having an AED on site and a staff person trained in its use could be the difference between life and death for someone who suffers sudden cardiac arrest at a health club facility. Likewise, our elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher learning host large concentrations of students and employees during operational hours and are the sites of athletic and other community activities throughout the day. Enacting this legislation will make schools in the State of Connecticut safer places to learn, work and play.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express our support of this important bill.

Sincerely,

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