

Members of the Judiciary Committee

I am writing to urge the state of Connecticut to pass SB 1089: To establish requirements and immunity for the use of automatic external defibrillators in health clubs and athletic facilities of public high schools and institutions of higher education.

Our Foundation strongly recommends legislation that would improve and strengthen existing Good Samaritan Laws in the states. Passage of SB1089 to update existing Good Samaritan laws would provide for the coherent use of full volunteer service at all levels in the event of a cardiac emergency. Good Samaritan protections for rescuers are especially important when sudden cardiac arrest occurs and seconds count. Unless CPR and defibrillation are provided within minutes of collapse few attempts at resuscitation are successful. It is estimated that the chance of survival drops by 10 percent for every minute that passes.

My son Louis was a freshman high school lacrosse goalie playing in his first game of his high school career. In the second quarter he was struck in the chest by the ball. He was perfectly healthy; however by being struck in the chest during the exact moment of his heart cycle, commonly called Commotio Cordis, he immediately went into sudden cardiac arrest. EMS arrived in 12 minutes but that was too late, he died on the field, March 25, 2000. Had an AED been available to Louis he would still be with our family today.

On May 7, 2002 Governor Pataki, of the state of New York passed Louis Law requiring all public schools in the state to have AEDs on school site and available to all who enter a school. This powerful law has saved the lives of 44 people in public schools that we can document and countless others that the Foundation has only heard about.

It is a sad fact that an estimated 350,000 Americans die every year from sudden cardiac arrest. AED's are becoming a standard piece of equipment in public places. We now need good citizens able and willing to react in the event of an emergency without fear of being sued for their good deed.

The Good Samaritan Law should provide rescuers with the peace of mind that their heroism will be protected. I cannot imagine someone walking away from a tragedy for fear of being sued. Please grant immunity to your good citizens of Connecticut. No one should die for the lack of an AED or the fear of being sued trying to save a life... Please understand the urgency of this bill, lives can and will be saved because of this life saving law.

Sincerely,

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