

Heart Disease and Stroke. You're the Cure.



American Heart Association | American Stroke Association.
Learn and Live.

TO: Energy and Technology Committee
**FROM: Joni Czajkowski, Sr. Director of Government Relations
American Heart Association**
DATE: February 23, 2010
RE: Senate Bill 179, An Act Requiring Continual 911 Services

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello and members of the Energy and Technology Committee. On behalf of the American Heart Association, I respectfully submit supporting testimony on SB 179, An Act Requiring Continual 911 Services.

The American Heart Association / American Stroke Association supports and advocates for public policies that will help improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths from cardiovascular disease and stroke by 20 percent by 2020. SB 179 speaks directly to one of the Association's public policy priorities, acute cardiovascular care.

The American Heart Association developed a step by step model to assist individuals when faced with a medical emergency. A strong Chain of Survival can improve chances of survival and recovery for victims of heart attack, stroke and other emergencies. The four links are Early Access (call 911), Early CPR, Early Defibrillation (AED) and Advanced Care (hospital).



It is imperative that when an emergency is recognized that the 911 system is activated. 911 dispatchers are critical to the Chain of Survival as they serve as a victim's point of entry to the medical system. 911 dispatchers will interview callers and collect valuable information as to provide the victim with the most appropriate medical care. Dispatches also serve as calm, reassuring voices assisting callers with focusing on the task at hand and at times, with even performing medical interventions such as CPR or childbirth.

Too many of us have experienced a medical emergency either personally or through a friend or family member. We know that in this situation, *every minute matters*. Could you imagine being in a situation where 911 services are needed only to encounter dead air when dialing 911? SB 179 will ensure that in the case that a customer's telephone services are terminated due to non-payment that 911 emergency medical services are not interrupted. No one should be without emergency 911 services and the bill before you would ensure that 911 emergency services will be available in every Connecticut home or business that we enter.

On behalf of the American Heart Association and the You're the Cure volunteer network; I ask that you support SB 179 and provide all Connecticut residents with continual 911 services.