



**American
Red Cross**

**American Red Cross
Statement to the Education Committee
of the Connecticut General Assembly
in support of HB 5349
*An Act Concerning the Inclusion of CPR and AED Training in the
Public School Curriculum***

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American Red Cross**

To the Chairs and Members of the Committee:

My name is Paul Shipman and I am Chief Communication Officer at the American Red Cross Connecticut and Rhode Island Region. I want to thank the Committee for the opportunity to share with you the American Red Cross position on **HB 5349, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of CPR and AED Training in the Public School Curriculum**. The American Red Cross strongly urges the committee to pass this important bill to require schools to provide students instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of a defibrillator as a requirement for graduation from high school.

The mission of the American Red Cross Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program is to promote and encourage public access to AEDs. We support the position that improved training and access to AEDs could save 50,000 lives each year. The American Red Cross believes that all Americans should be within four minutes of an AED and someone trained to use it.

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

By enacting legislation to support the use of AEDs and by increasing the number of individuals that are trained to respond, the survival rate can be increased significantly. Some studies indicate that early CPR and defibrillation can double the survival rates for sudden cardiac arrest victims.

The American Red Cross supports the increased availability of public access to AEDs and we do not want the public to not respond to someone in an emergency for fear of liability.

The American Red Cross wants to Train, Empower and Prepare a potential rescuer through training. The American Red Cross Lay Rescuer course for First Aid/ CPR/AED stresses the basic steps to follow in an emergency, beginning with the most important step – the decision to act – and helps participants confront their fears of getting involved and giving assistance.

Thank you for the opportunity to register support of this bill on behalf of the American Red Cross. We look forward to working with you, as you consider this important legislation.