



**American  
Red Cross**

**American Red Cross  
Testimony to the Joint Committee on Public Health  
of the Connecticut General Assembly  
in support of SB 684  
*An Act Concerning Training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation*  
February 23, 2015**

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To the Chairs and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joseph Lodge and I am here on behalf of the American Red Cross to offer testimony in support of **SB 684, An Act Concerning Training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation**. The American Red Cross urges the committee to pass this important bill to require schools to provide students instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The American Red Cross knows that training people in CPR and use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can save lives.

More than 300,000 Americans suffer from sudden cardiac arrest each year and less than 10 percent will survive. This is a health issue that strikes all age ranges. According to the journal *Pediatrics*, 2,000 Americans under the age of 25 die each year because of a cardiac emergency.

Studies indicate that early access to CPR and defibrillation can double the survival rates for sudden cardiac arrest victims, while for each minute that CPR and defibrillation are delayed, the person's chance for survival is reduced by

about 10 percent. By enacting legislation to increase the number of individuals who are trained to respond, the survival rate can be increased significantly.

Training in CPR and use of an AED by the American Red Cross or others can empower a potential rescuer to save lives. Our course in First Aid/ CPR/AED for lay responders details the steps to follow in an emergency, beginning with the most important step – the decision to act – and helps participants understand those steps to reduce their fears of getting involved and giving assistance.

Participants also learn how to recognize and respond to cardiac, breathing and first aid emergencies including performing CPR, using an AED and helping someone who is choking.

Students armed with this training could save untold numbers of lives – at school, in the community and at home.

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.