



Town of Farmington Fire Department
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www.Farmington-CT.org

Public Health Committee

Testimony in Support of SB 684:

AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING IN CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION

February 23, 2015

To the Members of the Public Health Committee,

I am writing to urge your support of SB 684, ***AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING IN CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION***. I present this testimony as a CPR Instructor Trainer for almost 20 years. I literally have spent thousands of hours teaching students how to perform CPR and teaching instructors how to teach CPR.

I am proud to serve as the Director of Fire & Rescue Services for the Town of Farmington Fire Department. Farmington was designed as a Heartsafe Community by the Connecticut Department of Public Health in 2010 and 2013. The Connecticut Department of Public Health administers the HEARTSafe Communities program to promote and recognize the efforts of local municipalities to provide improved cardiac response and care to its residents. A HEARTSafe Community promotes and supports: CPR training in the community; public access to defibrillation through strategic placement of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) for use by public safety professionals and other trained community members; and early advanced care.

I have been an advocate of the importance of knowing CPR for almost two decades. I personally know of a dozen lives that were saved because of the links of the Chain of Survival coming together within the Town of Farmington alone. Last year it became personal when one of those lives was my own Dad.

My Dad went into cardiac arrest at a Retirement Party for one of Farmington's Chiefs. If there is a "right" place and time to have a Cardiac Arrest, my father certainly picked it. The following article that ran in the Hartford Courant on April 14, 2014 provides an account of the evening – and demonstrates the importance of assuring that as many people as possible learn CPR. Early CPR and early AED intervention are the very reasons that my mother still has her husband, my sister and I still have our father, and my children still have their grandfather.

Please support SB 684.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. [unclear]".

Director of Fire & Rescue Services

The Town of Farmington Fire Department is dedicated to providing for the safety and welfare of the community through the preservation of life, property, and the environment, by maintaining a constant state of readiness through fire fighter training and public education.



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Retired Firefighter Saved After His Heart Stops Beating

April 14, 2014|

By DAVID OWENS, dowens@courant.com, The Hartford Courant

FARMINGTON — There's really no good place to have your heart stop beating, but Ed Lescoe is grateful nonetheless that when he stopped Friday night in a buffet line at the Farmington Gardens banquet facility, he was surrounded by people who knew what to do.

The occasion was a party to honor retiring Farmington Fire Chief Tim Vibert. The room was full of emergency medical technicians, paramedics, firefighters and police officers.

"I'm in the buffet line. I started feeling a little light-headed, a little faint," Lescoe recalled Monday night from his room at the University of Connecticut Health Center. "So I put my hand out just to steady myself on my wife Kathy's shoulder. That's the last thing I remember."

"He was right behind me," said Lescoe's daughter, Mary-Ellen Harper, who is Farmington's director of fire and rescue services. "My husband was next to him. My mother was there, too."

Harper said at first she thought that her father had stumbled. "I thought he just tripped, so we all reached out to steady him. His eyes closed and he just crumbled and we gently laid him on the ground."

Harper checked to see if her father was breathing while her husband, Tom Harper, who is a paramedic, checked for a pulse.

"We couldn't find either," she said.

Tom Harper began performing CPR. Mary-Ellen Harper said that a fire chief stepped forward and told her to let the others take care of her dad. Farmington Police Chief Paul Melanson took over CPR from Tom Harper.

Mary-Ellen Harper said that she took her mother and children to the other side of the room. "Mary Grace Reed sat down with my mom and the kids and she just kept talking to them," Harper said. Reed is the chairwoman of Farmington's board of education.

Harper and her husband stepped into another room.

"It was one of those situations where we had too much information," she said. "Reality just set in. I know that you have to be clinically dead for somebody to be doing CPR on you."

At the same time, the University of Connecticut paramedics on duty that night, who happened to be having dinner at the event, went to their truck to grab their gear, which included a defibrillator.

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As she and her husband began to prepare for the worst, one of the firefighters stepped into the room and said, "He's talking."

Harper went to her father, who was being prepared for transport to the UConn Health Center.

"He was talking and he was saying he was light-headed and he was hungry because he didn't have his dinner yet," Harper recalled.

On Monday, Lescoe said he did not suffer a heart attack, but instead experienced an arrhythmia, which is an abnormal heart rhythm. Doctors inserted an implantable cardioverter defibrillator to prevent another problem.

Lescoe, a retired Bloomfield firefighter and former Hartford Times photographer, said he's a lucky man. "If it happened anywhere else, I probably wouldn't be here to talk about it," he said. "People ought to learn how to use and know where the closest automatic external defibrillator is."

Harper said that her father was the third person this month to be saved by CPR in Farmington.

"I champion the chain of survival — the links needed to make up the chain to give someone the best chance of survival," she said.

They include early recognition of the medical emergency, an immediate call to 911, early CPR and early defibrillation and early access to advanced medical care.

"If you have all of these, the better your chance of surviving," she said.

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