

Public Health Committee  
Senate Bill 684  
February 23, 2015

First I would like to thank the Public Health Committee for taking on this very important bill and for the opportunity to testify in its support.

My name is Gloria Bindelglass. I am an emergency room nurse at Bridgeport hospital. My certifications include a Certification in Emergency Nursing, a certification in critical care nursing, and a certification in cardiac medicine. In addition, I am a certified CPR instructor, as well as a certified instructor in advanced adult life support and advanced pediatric life support.

As the name implies, sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) results in an immediate cessation of heart function. It is the largest cause of death in the United States and unfortunately, it often has no warning that it is about to occur. The only intervention that might make you a survivor of SCA is early activation of the emergency responders, early CPR and defibrillation.

For every minute that you are not defibrillated after a cardiac arrest, your chance of surviving the event goes down 10% percent per minute. Now, think for a minute about the average response time of your local EMS. If you live in a city, the average response time is three to eight minutes. If you live in a rural setting the average time is fifteen to eighteen minutes. Best case scenario? Your chance of surviving your event is 30%.

Now imagine you are lucky enough to have your arrest in a facility that has an AED. What do you think the chances are that a bystander has the confidence to use the AED and the knowledge to perform CPR?

As early as pre-school, children are taught the first crucial step in saving a life, dialing 911. Now take it to the next step. Children as young as eight can be taught to recognize an AED sign and apply and activate the device successfully. One step further, and seventh graders can competently activate 911, apply an AED and perform hands only CPR.

I was lucky enough to teach AED and hands only CPR to the seventh graders in my local middle school. In only two forty two minute science periods, I was

able to teach 170 children to perform, with confidence, these life saving skills. Some of the comments I got from the children include, "I know now that I can use an AED without an adult and not be scared," and "My Grandpa is very sick and lives with us. I can perform CPR now if I had to," and "Thank you for coming and showing us how easy it is to save someone's life." I am very proud to have added 170 lifesavers to my small community.

While it took 84 minutes to teach middle schoolers AED use and hands only CPR, in reality, these skills can be taught at the high school level in only thirty minutes.

So, if minutes count, now think back to my opening statement. No matter how long it takes EMS to arrive, this initiative will increase the chances that someone near you will know what to do. Invest in education and produce a whole generation of lifesavers.

I would have liked to have presented my testimony in person today. However, as you are listening to this, I am adding twenty new lifesavers to the population of the state of Connecticut.

Thank you.

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