

Public Health Committee  
Public Hearing  
Senate Bill 684 Testimony  
February 23, 2015

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Jim Funk. I reside in the town of Fairfield and I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 684, **An Act Concerning Training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation**. The more people know CPR the more lives can be saved in our towns. School is where students learn life lessons, CPR can be taught in less than 30 minutes. This lifesaving skill could be used to save the life of friend, neighbor or a loved one.

My family and I know this to be true because we experienced firsthand how CPR can make difference between life and death.

Christmas Day, 2013 started out like most. After opening presents with my wife and children, we then traveled up to Bethany for a further celebration. While at my parent's home, my 5 siblings and their families would all gather together for a full day of joy. I never thought that I would instead be spending the day following my mother in an ambulance to Yale New Haven Hospital.

It is very fitting that my mother enrolled me in a CPR class at age 12. It was a requirement for a babysitting class that was offered as an after school course at the Bethany Jr. High school. It would give me the confidence and the knowledge to continue CPR training through college, work and parenthood. I have probably been trained since the age of 12, 4 or 5 times. It was enough to prepare me for that Christmas day.

As we were all making Christmas dinner, my mother suddenly fell unconscious in the kitchen. I saw no warning signs. As a nurse she led a healthy lifestyle and never smoked. She seemed active that morning, no sweating, seemed a little tired but I thought it was because she was hosting over 30 people.

My sister Mary very quickly realized she had no breathing pattern or pulse and needed immediate CPR. Mary performed mouth to mouth and I administered chest compressions. We had another sister call for an ambulance while we continued with CPR on our mother for 5-7 minutes. Police, fire and EMT responders came, they took over for my sister and me and administered an AED 2-3 times. They then transported her to Yale New Haven Hospital where she was given emergency cardiac care. She has now made a full and complete recovery.

I have done extensive research since that day and have come to find out that my mother beat overwhelming odds. She went into sudden cardiac arrest that morning. It will happen to over 300,000 people in the United States this year. Their first symptom is often sudden death. It typically happens at home or at work with loved ones or friends there. It is miraculous if a 911 call gets responded to in under 5 minutes, typically in Connecticut it is 8 minutes or more. The human brain begins to lose permanent functionality after 4 minutes. Because of these logistics and time constraints, patients who go to a hospital with sudden cardiac arrest walk out alive, healthy and functioning only 10% of the time! 10% of the time!

What is the health care cost to society because of this? What happens to the quality of life because of this? My sister and I administered CPR on my mother that day and we are not one of those statistics. Most importantly, because my mother had the good sense to enroll her son in a CPR class nearly 40 years ago, she leads a happy healthy life today.

Sincerely , Jim Funk