

# **UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD**

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## **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Public Health Committee  
February 23, 2015

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### S.B. No. 684- An Act Concerning Training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

Good Afternoon Public Health Committee Members. My name is Valerie Cassidy and I am a licensed Registered Nurse and Paramedic in the State of Connecticut. I will be graduating this May from the University of Hartford with a Bachelor's Degree of Science in Nursing. Through Project Horizon, a community outreach program at the University of Hartford, I am working to implement a sustainable program to teach Freshman students at Hartford Public High School's Nursing Academy hands only Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, also known as CPR. My goal is to successfully train 150 students at the Nursing Academy. I am hopeful that you will support Senate Bill Number 684 that will require all high school students to receive CPR training.

Every second counts when a person's heart stops, especially in the community where medical equipment is not readily available. Studies have shown that performing effective chest compressions early on help to improve a patient's chances of survival or avoiding permanent disabilities. The more people in the community that are educated on how to perform hands only CPR may not only improve a patient's outcome, but also may reduce the cost of health care related to cardiac arrest.

Requiring CPR to be taught to high school students will have a significant impact on public health here in Connecticut. In addition to improving patient outcomes, learning the skill will help students have open discussion about how to develop healthful behaviors, prevent cardiac arrest and heart disease as well as learn basic emergency management measures. Having learned CPR myself at the age of 16, I was encouraged to build on that knowledge and to pursue a career in health care. For these reasons, high school students are an ideal population to engage. I hope to accomplish this through my work at Project Horizon with the students at Hartford Public High School.

The hands only CPR curriculum has already been developed and implemented in many places and is proven to be successful. It only takes 30 minutes to train groups of ten to twenty students. Startup costs are reasonable.

Most people who take CPR classes never expect to utilize the skills they learn. However, when faced with an emergency they are grateful that they had taken the time to prepare themselves and were ready to take action.

Thank you for the opportunity to explain why I believe Senate Bill Number 684 is crucial to the public health of Connecticut and will enhance high school student's education.