

Testimony in Support of H.247 – Cardiac Emergency Response Plans in Schools

Presented to the Committee on Education

Rep. Anthony “Tony” Micklus

Milton-Georgia

2/16/25

Dear Chair Conlon and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of H.247, a bill that would require schools to develop cardiac emergency response plans. I come before you not just as a supporter of this legislation but as someone who has seen the life-saving impact of quick action during a cardiac emergency.

On January 3rd of this year, sixteen-year-old Dominic Barcomb, a sophomore at Milton High School, collapsed during his JV2 basketball game at Spaulding High School. In an instant, his heart stopped. Thanks to the immediate intervention of trained staff, quick application of CPR, and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), Dominic’s life was saved. Without these crucial actions, this story could have had a much sadder ending.

Dominic’s story is not unique. Sudden cardiac arrest is a silent threat that can strike anyone, anywhere—especially young athletes.

While his survival is a testament to the heroism of those present that night, it is also a stark reminder that cardiac emergencies can happen at any time, in any school, and that preparedness makes the difference between life and death.

H.247 takes an essential step in ensuring that schools are ready for such moments by requiring every school district and independent school to create a cardiac emergency response plan. The bill outlines necessary components, including:

- The formation of a response team trained in CPR and AED use.
- The placement and maintenance of AEDs in accessible locations.
- Regular staff training and emergency drills.
- Coordination with local emergency medical services.

The effectiveness of this kind of planning is already well-documented. When schools have clear procedures, trained personnel, and accessible life-saving equipment, survival rates for sudden cardiac arrest increase dramatically.


As Dominic himself has expressed, he is only here today because the right people knew what to do at the right time. This legislation will help ensure that every school in Vermont is prepared to respond just as effectively, should another student, teacher, or visitor suffer a cardiac event.

I urge this committee to support H.247, not just as a policy but as a commitment to protecting the lives of Vermont’s students. No parent should have to wonder whether their child’s school is ready for a medical emergency. Let’s act now to make every school a safer place.

Thank you.

Cardiac Facts

(As provided by the American Heart Association)

 **A Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) can increase survival rates from cardiac arrest by 50% or more by enabling a trained lay-responder team to take action.**


 **23,000+ pediatric out-of-hospital cardiac arrests (OHCA) occur annually in the U.S.**

 **Sports-related SCA accounts for:**



- 39% of cases in those **≤18 years**
 - 13% in those **19 to 25 years**
 - 7% in those **25 to 34 years**
-

 **Survival rates double** when bystanders:

- Dial **911** 
 - Start **CPR** 
 - Use a **publicly available AED** 
-

 **70% of children** survive cardiac arrest in schools with AEDs—**7x the national average survival rate.**

 **Cardiac Arrest in the U.S.**

- **356,000+ out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur annually**
 - **90% are fatal** 
 - **Only 40%** of people receive CPR before emergency responders arrive 
-

(Citations Available upon request)