

Dear Appropriations Committee Members,

I am writing to provide written testimony regarding the inclusion of \$150,000 in the FY2026 budget to provide funding to help Vermont schools implement cardiac emergency response plans.

Emergency response plans help improve the chances of survival from a heart attack. Most schools in Vermont already have AEDs, but AEDs and CPR training are needed in all schools to help protect students, teachers, staff, and visitors. Recent cardiac events – including a life saving event at a basketball game at Spaulding last month – reinforce the importance of cardiac emergency plans, training, and quick responses.

Please support this budget line item to ensure that all schools – especially the state’s most rural schools that can be harder for emergency responders to reach quickly – have an emergency response plan in place.

Thank you,

Emily Morgan Belarmino, PhD, MPH