

HB 1376 – CPR Certification Funding 2025 Testimony

Chairman Heinert, and members of the House Education Committee. For the record I am Tony Burke, Government Relations Director for the American Heart Association.

As a retired firefighter/EMT with nearly 20 years of service, I've witnessed the critical importance of CPR and AED use within the first 1-3 minutes of a cardiac event. Throughout my career, many of our calls we were simply too late—not due to a lack of skill or speed, but because time was against us and the person in need. From someone identifying a cardiac incident, to calling 9-1-1, relaying information to first responders, to arriving and assessing the situation, even in urban areas, 4-5 minutes can pass quickly. In suburban, rural, and frontier communities, factors like distance, weather and nighttime driving can extend this time, often exceeding 10 minutes before first responders can even begin treatment, significantly affecting survival chances.

Given the growing crisis in ambulance services, it's crucial to empower the next generation to act in emergencies. With our advanced understanding that hands-only CPR is effective and the simplified use of AEDs, teaching these skills is much easier.

Providing funding for CPR and AED training for students before graduation can introduce thousands of lifesavers into communities annually. Offering certification options further enhances students' workforce readiness for various occupations

This policy supports the American Heart Association's Nation of Lifesavers™ initiative, aiming to transform bystanders into lifesavers. It ensures that during a

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cardiac emergency, anyone, anywhere, is prepared and empowered to become a crucial link in the chain of survival by providing CPR.

Additionally, as you will hear in the next bill on the agenda, HB 1363 Cardiac Emergency Response Plans, this bill will complement that effort. Your American Heart Association stands ready to support this work and we ask you to vote in favor of HB 1376.

Mr. Chairman, this completes my testimony. I am available to address any questions. Thank you.