

Testimony for HB 1363

Senate Education Committee

Greg Gallagher

March 17, 2025

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am Greg Gallagher, a Mandan resident, a member of the Mandan Health Coalition, and Vice-Chair of the Statewide Advocacy and Engagement Committee of the American Health Association in North Dakota. I submit this testimony as a private citizen and not as a lobbyist or representative for any other party. I testify in support of HB 1363 based on my understanding of this matter gained through my involvement with these and other organizations.

Quite simply, HB 1363 is a consequential bill that will save lives.

This legislation ensures that all schools in North Dakota will develop and deploy meaningful cardiac arrest response plans and supportive training measures to enable school staff to intervene immediately during a cardiac emergency. During such an event, it is critical for attending staff to know what to do, how to communicate and coordinate activities, how to administer CPR, where to locate and how to operate an AED, and how to attend to the needs of the affected individual until qualified EMTs can arrive and transport the individual. These orchestrated activities require forethought, planning, and training to improve the prospects of a successful outcome. During an emergency, every second matters and the first ten minutes can oftentimes determine the prospects of an outcome. With such time constraints, the rapid and informed actions of onsite responders will improve the probability of saving an individual's life well before any EMTs might arrive, especially in more remote locations.

Schools across North Dakota serve as centers for education, recreation, athletics, music, theater, speech, organizations, and community events of all kinds, bringing together students, teachers, staff, coaches, parents, grandparents, and citizens from far and wide to

participate in the life of the community. It is what schools were meant to be: centers for the community. And wherever people of all ages and health conditions meet, there exists the prospect for a cardiac emergency to occur. We know this. We can plan for this. We can improve the prospects of saving lives. HB 1363 sets in place a means for us to carry this out—and we should. Given what we know about cardiac emergencies and how we can save lives, we have an obligation to do exactly that: save lives.

North Dakota schools are approved and accredited by the state on the principle of advancing improvements. HB 1363 defines a straightforward way to improve the safety and welfare of the many individuals touched by schools everywhere, every day. This legislature holds in its hands a means to improve emergency intervention measures that will save lives. I respectfully implore you to do so.

Thank you.