

March 7, 2025

To: Senator Mary K. Kunesch,
Chair, Senate Education Finance Committee and members of the committee:

I am a member of a grassroots organization called the Minnesota SCA Advocates. SCA stands for sudden cardiac arrest – when the heart suddenly stops beating effectively and a person will die if something isn't done quickly to bring the heart back to normal rhythm.

Minnesota SCA Advocates is a group established in 2024 with a mission of saving lives from sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) by building a statewide collaboration of individuals and organizations dedicated to education, prevention and treatment of sudden cardiac arrest.

We have about 40 members – many of them parents of adolescents who had SCA. Some lost a precious son or daughter to SCA, others have a son or daughter who survived SCA (due to prompt cardiopulmonary resuscitation or CPR by bystanders and the use of an automated external defibrillator or AED). Other members are adult SCA survivors, community advocates and/or leaders involved in SCA education, awareness and CPR/AED training and AED placement.

Members of our group have helped train thousands of Minnesotans in CPR and AED use, and have raised money for AEDs in schools, parks and public buildings.

When your committee reviews Senate File 1457 regarding cardiac emergency response plans for schools, I'd ask you to think about several perspectives on what can happen without such plans.

- A teacher witnesses a student collapse from sudden cardiac arrest. The school has no AED. He/she learned CPR a long time ago but feels uncertain about what to do. The faculty or staff have never discussed a cardiac emergency response plan.
- The family of that student lose their loved one because the school doesn't have a plan, doesn't have an AED, and/or hasn't offered or required staff CPR/AED training.
- Imagine the family of a parent who has sudden cardiac arrest while attending a football game at the local high school. The school has an AED, but it's locked in an office inside the school. Bystanders attempt CPR, but unsuccessfully. No cardiac emergency response plan was ever made to anticipate this scenario.

Senate File 1457 addresses these scenarios. Please vote in favor of this vital legislation.

Sincerely,



Gary Schwitzer
Plymouth
Minnesota SCA Advocates member