

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

My name is Kelly Youland. I would describe myself as a transplant-Minnesotan, a pharmacist, a wife, and a mother to three amazing young girls. One thing I never labeled myself as was a political activist. But, I am writing to you today, as a member of the Minnesota SCA Advocates organization and a passionate CPR advocate, after my three month old daughter suffered a cardiac arrest last spring.

Cardiac arrests can happen for a multitude of reasons. As you're probably aware, they can happen to well-conditioned professional athletes on the football field, to very sick patients in the hospital, to those with heart abnormalities and to those with perfectly functioning hearts, like our daughter's.

When a *child* suffers a sudden cardiac arrest, or SCA, outside of the hospital, it's always unexpected. It can happen on a sunny spring day without any warning, just like it did with Emma. But, Emma's lucky enough to have a doctor as a dad and today she is meeting all of her age-appropriate milestones because CPR was started almost immediately. Her heart took sixteen painstakingly long minutes to beat again on its own, but during that time, CPR pumped her blood when her heart could not. But what if we could live in a world where we didn't need to count on luck or the off chance that someone's parent was in the medical field?

It is well understood that the chance of survival for an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest increases the sooner that CPR is started. Unfortunately, only 40%¹ of people who suffer one get immediate help, contributing to the dismal statistic that only 5-10%² of people survive. We are in support of SF 1457 because the more people that know CPR and how to use an AED, the higher likelihood of survival. Even a minute or two delay in Emma receiving CPR could have led to a much different outcome. A ten minute delay and she likely would not be alive. There are so many heartbreaking examples of children who suffered a SCA and the symptoms weren't recognized, or someone wasn't trained in CPR, or an AED wasn't nearby. We want Emma and her sisters and our neighbors' children to attend schools and athletic practices surrounded by staff that know what to do if such an emergency were to happen again. And it will, to other Minnesota children. SCA unfortunately affects more than 23,000 children and adolescents in this country each year³ and approving this bill would help to reduce the number of deaths and keep Minnesota children safe. We need to rely less on the *chance* that someone trained will be nearby, and have it be the standard going forward.

Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Kelly Youland

1. <https://cpr.heart.org/en/resources/cpr-facts-and-stats>
2. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/ebiom/article/PIIS2352-3964\(23\)00029-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/ebiom/article/PIIS2352-3964(23)00029-4/fulltext)
3. <https://parentheartwatch.org/resources/incidence-of-sca-in-youth/>