



Children's Hospital Colorado

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Testimony for SB25-191 for House Education

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Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Julie Wilken and I have been a Registered Nurse for 27 years and the Clinical Manager of the School Health Team at Children's Hospital Colorado and here today to earn your support on SB25-191. Prior to my time at Children's, I was the Director of Health Services in the two largest school districts in the state.

Serving for many years as a school health leader across the state of Colorado, I am here to offer my experience in sharing the importance of Automated External Defibrillators, otherwise known as AEDs in the school setting. When a student collapses from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), for every minute that the heart beats with an irregular rhythm, survival rates drop by 10%. Therefore, time is of the essence – every single minute matters. No student with an unknown, underlining heart dysrhythmia should die from SCA. School nurses can teach high school staff how to respond to an emergency and provide lunch and learns with the AED. You do not need to be CPR certified to operate an AED.

I am also in full support of the second half of this bill – removing a medical provider's signature and removing a list of authorized AED users. This is an archaic expectation and a huge barrier to Colorado schools. My school health team at Children's Hospital Colorado has had a unique opportunity this past school year to support and train Colorado rural school nurses. In this training, we spend 45 minutes empowering rural school nurses to lead mock medical emergency drills and teach school staff about the awareness and accessibility of all AEDs in their schools. We have listened this past year to many stories from rural school nurses that not only does their school not have an AED, but if they do, many of them are unable to find a local medical provider to sign off on the order.

When children suffer from SCA, they are often brought to Children's Hospital Colorado for further care, if they are still alive. Children's Pediatric Heart Institute has been able to share success stories, along with unfortunately, non-success stories. AEDs matter!

In closing, Children's Hospital Colorado urges your support on SB25-191. I thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Thank you,

Julie Wilken

House Education

04/03/2025 01:30 PM

SB25-191 Cardiac Emergency Plans for School Sports

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Emma Sanderson For themselves</p>	<p>Mister Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.</p> <p>My name is Emma Sanderson, and I am a student at the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver and a policy and advocacy intern with the Chronic Care Collaborative. I am speaking in support of SB-191 as a tribute to my friend who died of a heart attack while at swim practice at age 16, as a junior in high school. He was one of the 23K students in the US who experience it each year. No one could have seen it coming. There was no AED plan in place for him, and when the paramedics finally arrived, they could not save him. As some of you may know from your own experience, the death of a student at such a young age is disastrous to the whole community. It continues to weigh on my community today, 12 years later.</p> <p>Justin was involved in everything. He was a dedicated scholar, athlete, singer, actor, and a best friend to so many. Campus turned dark with his death. Where there should have been smiles and inquisitive faces learning, there were lifeless bodies going through the motions. Nights where we should have been laughing, gossiping about crushes, learning about ourselves, or (maybe) studying for SATs, there instead were tears and stories of the smiles Justin continued to bring to our faces. Most of, if not all of, my friends and I had to take their SATs again in our senior year and redo many of our assignments. We continue to share memories to this day.</p> <p>His parents created a whole movement around their only child. A few months ago, his parents lost their house to the fires in LA. They lost every physical reminder they had from him, which brought on a whole other wave of grief. All who love him continue to show immense strength and resilience, but they should not have to.</p>

	<p>What I have not yet shared is that 3 years earlier, my class experienced another death in our class after our classmate was hit by a car. While today we cannot stop cars from driving too fast around blind corners and by school bus stops, we can help prevent so many deaths of young students with so much life ahead of them who have so much impact on the community. We have the chance to save communities from suffering the way that mine did. We have the ability to save lives and cannot pass by this opportunity.</p> <p>Think about the young students that you know. This bill, SB191, is an important step toward not only protecting their lives, but also protecting them from the pain that my community and I faced. If for nothing else, I ask that you support SB191 for the kids in your life.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
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