

Senate Education Committee

Ryan Meleedy 271-4151

HB 763-FN, relative to school emergency plans for sports related injuries.

Hearing Date: April 8, 2025

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Ward, Sullivan, Abbas, Prentiss and Altschiller

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill further specifies requirements for emergency plans for sports related injuries and appropriates \$80,000 each fiscal year of the biennium to the division of fire standards and training and emergency medical services to aid in funding and distributing AEDs to schools, in order that they may comply with requirements for AEDs according to emergency plans for sports related injuries.

Sponsors:

Rep. Drye

Rep. Ladd

Rep. Sykes

Rep. DeSimone

Sen. Prentiss

Who supports the bill: Representative Margaret Drye, Representative Glenn Cordelli, Jonathan Melanson (NH Athletic Trainers Association), Emily Knight (Who We Play For), Nancy Vaughan (American Heart Association) Janet Lucas, Cindy LaCroix, Laura Vincent, Mason Bliss, Karen Brieger, Lois Cote

Who opposes the bill: Sarah Lynn Williams

Who is neutral on the bill: No one signed in neutrality to this bill.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Representative Margret Drye

- Representative Drye offered the committee the story of Matt Keane of Berlin, New Hampshire, who collapsed on a soccer field when he was 17 years old. She expressed that because an AED, a trained nurse, and an athletic trainer were readily available, he was revived. She stated that she was on the rescue call, which responded to the call and saw first-hand the benefit of having an AED readily available.
- She expressed that House Bill 763 answers the comments and concerns that a similar bill raised last year. This year's version answers the question of

who this applies to, which is schools with grades 4-12 and schools where students are the ones participating in athletic activity.

- She expressed that last year, they also received questions about where AEDs need to be physically available. This bill ensures that an AED is nearby but not necessarily one at every sports venue.
- She explained that House Bill 763 provides flexibility to accommodate federal guideline changes.
- She explained that this bill's fiscal note is overly broad. She noted that the fiscal note incorporates CPR training every year when the requirement is every two years. She also said that the cost of an AED in the fiscal note does not consider the New Hampshire program that allows AEDs to be purchased at largely discounted rates. She established that the fiscal note also does not consider school districts that already have AEDs.
- Senator Prentiss expressed that she was involved when the Keane family made their initial donation to the state and asked Representative Drye if she would be open to an amendment that would allow for gifts from other families and foundations. She stated that if a fund is set up, people could donate there, and Fire Standards and Training may be able to manage it. Senator Prentiss envisions the amendment to reflect a program similar to the program the Fish and Game has established. Representative Drye responded that she would be open to that amendment and further reflected on the scenario she previously testified about and acknowledged that it inspired many Kimble Union Academy alumni to contribute to the program.
- Senator Ward asked for clarification regarding the costs associated with CPR training, specifically who is being trained. Representative Drye responded that that question would be specific to the district's emergency action plan. She established it would likely be the nurse and any other people designated in the emergency response plan that is not already trained. She stated that there are people throughout the state, like herself, that provide this training free of charge for school districts.

Nancy Vaughn - American Heart Association

- Ms. Vaughn testified in support of House Bill 763 and established that this is a policy priority for her organization across the country.
- Ms. Vaughn explained that 40% of the 23,000 children who suffer cardiac arrest are in sports-related incidents.
- Ms. Vaughn expressed that because this is a budget year, this is the opportunity to ensure under-resourced schools have the ability to ensure the students on their properties remain safe.

- Senator Sullivan asked how many schools in the state of New Hampshire already have AEDs. Ms. Vaughn was unsure, but Senator Prentiss established that there is a registry hosted by the Department of Safety that compiles all of that information. She stated that years ago, the Keene family's donation provided every school without an AED with one.
- Senator Sullivan asked how often an AED needs to be replaced. Senator Prentiss responded that the only things that need to be replaced are the pads that have an expiration date.

Emily Knight - Who We Play For

- Ms. Knight testified in support of House Bill 763 as a practicing nurse in the Seacoast.
- Ms. Knight expressed that she wished schools would incorporate educational opportunities about cardiac events the way schools have training exercises for fire drills and active shooter drills.
- She established that at the initial stages of the screening of kids across the state, 6 out of 700 kids were at risk for cardiac arrest.
- She established that the only protection we can give students at risk of cardiac arrest is to ensure that staff is CPR-trained, there is an AED available, and an emergency plan is in place.
- She stated the federal Hearts Act was signed into law in December.
- She established that every minute without an AED decreased their chance of survival by 10%.
- Senator Prentiss asked if it would be fair to say that this bill not only helps students but also supports anyone at the event, such as mothers, fathers, and grandparents. Ms. Knight established that this bill does not just protect athletes. House Bill 763 protects the school and anyone on a school campus.
- Senator Sullivan asked what the screening criteria she is using to catch instances of students being at risk for cardiac arrest are. Ms. Knight replied that during traditional sports physicals, physicians only catch 4% of the cardiac arrhythmia or anatomical problems present. The only way to catch these cases is to utilize an EKG to screen the children. She stated that because we can't screen every child with an EKG, we need to be prepared with the provisions prescribed in this bill.