



March 5, 2026

Senator Steve A. Cwodzinski
Chair, Senate Education Policy Committee
Minnesota Senate
St. Paul, MN

Dear Chair Cwodzinski and Members of the Senate Education Policy Committee:

I am writing to ask for your support of Senate File 3548, legislation that will require high school and middle school coaches to obtain training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator (AED) use.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the leading cause of sudden death in young athletes and most commonly occurs during or just after physical exertion, while engaged in practice sessions, organized competition, or other sports activities. With only seconds to react and every minute crucial, having an appropriate plan in place during a sudden cardiac emergency can make a difference in survival. **Each minute following sudden cardiac arrest, survival decreases, however, when treated with defibrillation within 3–5 minutes, survival rates increase 50%–70%.**

According to the Minnesota State High School League, more than 230,000 Minnesota students were active in athletic activities last year. This legislation will ensure that coaches are properly trained to respond to SCA emergencies and keep our students safe.

The AHA applauds Senator Bonnie Westlin for authoring this important legislation and extends our appreciation to you and the committee for hearing this bill.

I ask for your support of this life-saving legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul L. Weirtz". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Paul L. Weirtz
State Government Relations Director
American Heart Association