



April 8, 2013

The Honorable Mark Hass  
Chair, Education and Workforce Development Committee  
Oregon Senate 900 Court St NE, S-207  
Salem, OR 97301

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Re: Support for SB 818

Dear Senator Hass:

AMSSM is writing in support of Oregon SB 818, which would educate parents, student-athletes and coaches on the risks of commotio cordis – a potentially fatal cardiac arrhythmia that occurs when an otherwise healthy victim is struck in the chest by a projectile or other object. Commotio cordis is a condition whose impact far exceeds public awareness of the problem. In fact, commotio cordis is responsible for more fatalities in sporting activities than all sport-related head injuries combined (concussion included) and is the leading cause of traumatic death in youth baseball.

The purpose of SB 818 is two-fold. First, it will require schools to review their emergency action plans and take into account the placement and accessibility of AED's on school campuses. Mortality statistics for commotio are startling. Survival rate of victims where an AED is not used within 3 minutes is only 5%. This is a tragic statistic, considering that applying defibrillation within three minutes increases survival rates to at least 40%, and approaching 58% in school settings where AED usage is optimized. Second, SB 818 should ensure that each school's AED is kept in an easily-accessible place, within one minute walk time from playgrounds or places of competition. Oregon SB 1033, passed in 2010, requires schools in Oregon to have at least one AED on each campus. Placement of a school's AED within a one minute radius allows time for retrieval, return, and use on the victim in the brief window of time that treatment for commotio cordis is still effective.

The necessity of immediate response to commotio cordis collapse also highlights the value of certified athletic trainers or other trained emergency responders at venues where competition is taking place. No retrieval or use of an AED can take place until a victim is identified as needing emergency care. Therefore school emergency action plans need to take into account not only the accessibility of an AED on campus, but also the accessibility of students to personnel trained in basic cardiac life support, and the average response time of paramedic response to school emergencies.

SB 818 is a cost-neutral bill that does not impose undue administrative or economic burdens on local school systems. We believe that this is the type of issue that legislators of all political persuasions can wholeheartedly get behind.

The American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM) is a multi-disciplinary organization of sports medicine physicians whose members are dedicated to education, research, advocacy and the care of athletes of all ages. Founded in 1991, the AMSSM is now comprised of thousands of sports medicine physicians – many of whom serve in active roles as team physicians at the high school, collegiate and professional level – many in Oregon. AMSSM appreciates the Oregon state legislature considering this issue and respectfully encourages support for SB 818. If we can be of assistance on this or other issues related to sports medicine, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Chad Carlson, MD  
Chair, Practice and Policy Committee  
Board of Directors, AMSSM