

TO: Chair Margaret Doherty & House Education Committee

FROM: Kaylee Nelson
Springfield, Oregon

DATE: May 7, 2015

RE: SB 79 – Teaching CPR in schools

Chair Doherty & Committee Members,

My name is Kaylee Nelson, and I live in Springfield, Oregon. I'm a recent University of Oregon graduate, the current Miss University of Oregon, and a volunteer with Eugene Springfield Fire & Rescue's CPR in schools initiative, ACT:C3.

I'd like to share with you why Senate Bill 79 is important for Oregon.

Cardiac arrest can happen at anytime, anywhere. Four out of five times, it happens at home. While the life that you save could be a stranger, it's more likely to be a friend or family member. The last time that it was studied, Oregon ranked as the **5th worst** state for cardiac arrest survival (MMWR Feb 15, 2002 51(06):123-6).

I know firsthand what it's like to feel helpless in an emergency when a loved one is in trouble. In 2011 I watched as my sister had a seizure. It is such a terrible feeling to watch someone you love go through something like that and to feel utterly helpless at the same time. What frustrates me the most is that there was only one person out of a crowd of twenty that stepped forward to help her. Thankfully my sister did not need CPR that day, but I knew that I never wanted to feel helpless like that ever again. I wouldn't wish that feeling on anyone.

That's why I have volunteered my time to support the work of Eugene Springfield Fire & Rescue and their initiative to improve survival rates from sudden cardiac arrest. Since 2012, the department has trained approximately 3,000 students in Hands-Only CPR at 10 middle and high schools in Lane County. They've enlisted the help of other community members, including college students from the Alpha Phi sorority at the University of Oregon.

During these classroom trainings, I have found that CPR is both easy to learn and simple to teach. We are able to educate students about CPR, as well as to provide students with hands-on training and practice within one class period. Teachers are welcoming and helpful. Students are excited, engaged, and empowered.

The work of fire departments like Eugene Springfield Fire & Rescue is invaluable—but they can't do it alone. Schools can play a critical role in helping to equip the next generation with this simple, lifesaving skill. Ensuring that CPR training is required for all students will put more lifesavers into every community across the state. Across the country, 21 states have passed similar legislation requiring students to be CPR-trained prior to graduating. It's time for Oregon to join in.

Anyone can learn CPR and everyone should know how. I encourage you to support Senate Bill 79. With this bill alone, 45,000 trained lifesavers will be added to our Oregon community every year. Think of the lives they will save.

Thank you.