

TO: Chair Doherty and Committee Members
House Committee on Education

FROM: Raoul Meekcoms
11067 SW Plum Court
Tualatin, OR 97062

DATE: May 8, 2015

RE: Support of SB 79

Dear Chair Doherty and Committee Members,

My name is Raoul Meekcoms, and I live in Tualatin.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of Senate Bill 79.

On August 12, 2012 I had a sudden cardiac arrest at my home. I am one of the very lucky few who survive this type of event. Each year, nearly 424,000 people have sudden cardiac arrest outside of a hospital and only 10.4% survive.

With the assistance of the 911 operator, my wife performed Hands-Only CPR for over 5-1/2 minutes prior to the arrival of First Responders. This was just the beginning of a chain of events that led to my survival and providing me the opportunity to speak with you today. The longest period of Hands-Only CPR was for 44 minutes later that afternoon while in ICU. I credit my survival to my wife's initial CPR - which allowed my vital organs to be sustained - and the subsequent care by the Tualatin Police Department, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, Metro West Ambulance Service and the excellent staff at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital.

By training students in Hands-Only CPR we are creating a potential lifesaving group that may not only save the lives of family members but may save fellow students and other victims of sudden cardiac arrest. When a CPR-trained bystander is near, they can double, even triple these victims' survival rates by giving victims the help they need until EMT's arrive.

Requiring all Oregon students to be trained in CPR before graduating will better equip our community members to help save a life and prevent disability in those first critical minutes before First Responders arrive on the scene.

We have tools that allow victims of sudden cardiac arrest a chance of survival but none so numerous as that of our children.

Please pass Senate Bill 79 and help create a new generation of lifesavers. Thank you for your time and public service.