

TRAVIS NELSON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 44
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Testimony in Support of House Bill 4160

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am the State Representative for House District 44 - North and Northeast Portland. I am submitting testimony in support of HB 4160.

I have spent more than twenty years as a nurse. I've been in the room when someone's heart stopped. I know all too well how fast a bad situation can turn into a fatal one when there isn't a clear plan. In a cardiac emergency, minutes matter. Every minute without CPR or an AED dramatically lowers the chance of survival.

Having grown up in eastern rural Washington, I know all too well the realities of EMS response time. That is not a criticism of first responders. It is just the reality of distance, staffing and geography. Many communities within our state are rural and, those minutes matter. When an emergency does happen, the people already on site become the first responders.

Schools are also one of the few places in rural communities where large groups gather. They are classrooms, gyms, and community centers all at once. When something goes wrong there, we owe it to students, staff, and families to be ready.

A Cardiac Emergency Response Plan is not complicated. It is simply about knowing who will act, where the AED is, that it works, and that people have practiced what to do. Having an AED in a building is important, but it is not enough if no one knows where it is or hesitates because they are unsure of the plan.

I have seen hesitation cost lives, and one of the first things we learn in healthcare is to always have a plan. This bill will ensure that our schools, even in the rural areas, are better prepared. Rural students deserve the same level of protection as students anywhere else in our state. HB 4160 is practical, reasonable, and focused on saving lives.

As a personal story, fifteen years ago, I collapsed on the job. Luckily, I was working at a hospital when I went into respiratory arrest, and my colleagues saved my life. If I had not been at the hospital, I would not be with you all today. I learned the hard way that I have a clotting disorder called Factor V Leiden, and at that point, my lungs, heart and of my legs, was filled with blood clots. I'm lucky to have survived. If my colleagues had not intervened, I would not be here. So, I strongly urge your support for this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I thank you.

Sincerely,

State Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44, North/NE Portland