



LATE

P.O. Box 30584
Honolulu, HI 96820
808-388-5911
info@AEDInstitute.com

Testimony on behalf of:
House Bill 1537 Relating to Automated External Defibrillators
Monday, March 16 Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: conference room 016 of the State Capitol

Heart disease is the number one killer of citizens in the United States. Every single day nearly 1000 individuals die from sudden cardiac arrest in the United States. Every year, year after year, sudden cardiac arrest claims the lives of at least 325,000 people in the United States. Cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anywhere and at anytime. Sudden cardiac arrest is a public health crisis.

As the AED Program Coordinator for Hawaii's largest Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) Program I am here today to testify on behalf of House Bill 1537 Relating to Automated External Defibrillators. The DOT-A has been responsible for the public implementation of over 100 Automated External Defibrillators (AED) on six islands and in 13 airports. Each of the AEDs has been placed in a public location for rapid response to a possible cardiac arrest victim. With the installation of the AEDs we felt the most important part of the program was to ensure that there would be a confident citizen to step forward and bring the AED to the victim's side. In the last two years we have educated more than 2000 airport employees in a classroom format on how to respond to a cardiac arrest victim and how to perform proper CPR and use the AED. Our goal was to ensure that every student who took the class would feel confident and qualified to help a victim of cardiac arrest in an airport public location. The class teaches you that you really do not need to know very much to save a life. But this is something that you do not know unless you are given the education.

It has now been two years since our program was established and in that period, the DOT-A has experienced ten (10) cardiac arrests in public areas. The victims of these events have been both airport employees and tourists. Of the ten events we have had eight successful survivors. Each of the eight cardiac arrest survivors had the same thing in common. Their cardiac arrest was witnessed by a citizen bystander. The victims had a bystander call 911 and perform immediate CPR. The victims had an AED brought to their side within minutes of the event. Each of the victims received at least one shock from the AED. Each victim was awake prior to the arrival of EMS.

Of the two other victims, a citizen called 911 and waited. Both of these victims were pronounced at the scene. Each citizen bystander made the same statement to me, "I did not know what to do". None of the citizen bystanders had been taught CPR or how to use an AED. They were afraid and felt helpless. In each of these cases there is not only one victim, there were many... the victim of the cardiac arrest, the rescuer who felt helpless, the mother or father who did not get to say good-bye, the children who lost their mother or father, the friends and family who have been left without their loved one. These are very heartbreaking events and may have had a different outcome if someone had taken a chance and performed CPR and used the AED.

Operation Stay'N Alive, the largest PAD Program in Hawaii, has saved lives, but only because someone responded to the emergency by performing CPR and using an AED. Educating a person in the use of an AED is easy and we will continue our effort to train any volunteer or employee who wants to learn.

With the passing and signing of SB 1675 in May of 2007, PAD Programs have been implemented in all walks of life throughout the State of Hawaii. Every month I am told of another survivor who is alive today because someone took action, performed CPR, and used an AED. Placing an AED on the wall is only the first step but that is not enough. AED Institute is a very strong advocate for education, training, and AED Programs that have a plan of action in case of an event. An AED on the wall will not save a life unless someone responds, and without hesitation, utilizes it.

As a PAD Program Director for hundreds of AEDs in our state, I am asking for you to please add the proposed additional language to the existing Act 91. If this additional language will give organizations the confidence to implement AED Programs in their communities, then it will be successful in saving more lives in our state.

In closing, *Operation Stay'N Alive* has proven that when a cardiac arrest occurs in a public place, if a bystander witnesses the event, notifies 911, performs good high-quality CPR, uses an AED within minutes, the victim has a great chance of survival and returning to their life, family, and friends.

Sincerely,
Pamela Foster, RN
President and CEO for AED Institute of America, Inc
PAD Program Director for the Airports of Hawaii
1-808-388-5911