

Sen. Harriss Passes School AED Bill

by Lynsey Whitaker
April 11 2024 10:10 AM



SPRINGFIELD – State Senator Erica Harriss (56th-Glen Carbon) passed legislation to potentially help save lives by requiring automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to be present at all school locations and events.

“While AEDs are already required under state law to be accessible at any physical fitness facility on public and private school premises, it only made sense to further extend the protection provided by AEDs to all extracurricular activities,” said Senator Harriss.

[Senate Bill 3571](#) requires automated external defibrillator (AED) to be present at all schools during the school day and during school-sponsored extracurricular activities and events on school grounds.

“Regardless of the sport or event, anyone in attendance at these functions could suffer a medical emergency and need the lifesaving support that an AED could provide,” said Senator Harriss. “This is why it’s important that our school facilities are equipped with AEDs.”

This bill idea came to Senator Harriss from Gail and Mark Holthaus, who lost their 18-year-old son Greg to cardiac arrest. Since his death, Gail has founded a non-profit aimed at providing training, testing, and equipment such as AEDs to help save lives.

“Since Greg’s passing, my husband Mark and I don’t want another family to endure what we went through,” said Gail Holthaus. “There are so many young people who have undetected heart conditions and to know someone’s chances of surviving can literally be tripled if an AED were to be present, it’s why we have made this our mission to help save lives.”

The bill will now head to the House of Representatives for further consideration.