

February 15, 2012

The Honorable Frank Pallone
House of Representatives
237 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3006

Dear Congressman Pallone:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to offer our strong support for the **Cardiomyopathy Health Education, Awareness, Risk Assessment, and Training in the Schools (HEARTS) Act of 2011 (H.R. 3625)**. We applaud your efforts in introducing this legislation to increase awareness of cardiomyopathy and sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) through schools.

As you know, SCA strikes 7,000 children a year and only 5 percent survive. It is the leading cause of death on school property, with one student athlete falling victim to SCA every three to four days. Most children who suffer SCA have an undetected heart disease such as cardiomyopathy. An estimated 30,000 children in the United States are living with this chronic heart condition. However for every diagnosed child, there is most likely another undiagnosed child unknowingly at risk of sudden cardiac arrest.

All too often, we hear of a student collapsing on the athletic field or even in line at the cafeteria because they were not properly diagnosed. The HEARTS Act will help educate parents, schools, and health professionals about cardiomyopathy and encourage families to evaluate their family's cardiac history, check for cardiomyopathy symptoms, and seek medical screening if necessary. It will also enable health and school professionals to be prepared should a student have an adverse cardiac event. These preventative measures have the potential to save so many young lives.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We stand ready to work with you, your staff, and your colleagues to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

American Heart Association
Children's Cardiomyopathy Foundation
Florida Heart Research Institute
Heartfelt Cardiac Projects
Heart Rhythm Society
Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Association
John Taylor Babbitt Foundation
Keegan's Spirit Foundation
Ken Carlson, Jr. Memorial Foundation
KEN (Kids Endangered Now) Heart Foundation
Matthew Krug Foundation
Parent Heart Watch
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Project ADAM
R. Andrew Helgeson Memorial Foundation
Run for Sarah
Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation
The Chad Foundation for Athletes & Artists
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease