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Bill to Implement California Youth Cardiac Screening Pilot Program Passes Unanimously Through Senate

May 27, 2022 — Sacramento, CA — The Eric Paredes Save A Life Foundation, in partnership with Senator Brian Jones, has seen SB 1135: The California Youth Cardiac Screening Pilot pass unanimously through the Senate. The bill proposes to augment current state law on sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) prevention by establishing a three-year, school-based initiative to collect data on the heart health of students in grades five through 12. The pilot would be overseen by the California Department of Education.

“Senate Bill 1135 builds on the great work the *Eric Paredes Save a Life Foundation* and others have been doing to prevent sudden cardiac arrest,” stated Senator Brian W. Jones. “This public health service will greatly inform the need for early identification of children with undetected heart conditions, who can then be treated and monitored.” Senator Jones is joined by Senator Patricia Bates of Orange County as Principal Coauthor of SB 1135.

Building on the impact the [Eric Paredes Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act](#) (Sections 33479–33479.9 of the Education Code) has made to protect young hearts, the addition of Section 33480 leverages the current health and safety collaboration with school-based populations by providing life-saving services while collecting data that will help formulate future recommendations to further address the unmet public health issue of SCA in youth.

“The previous passage of the Eric Paredes Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act (AB1639, 2017) and Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Protocol (AB379, 2020) has elevated heart safety in youth sports programs, similar to concussions,” said Hector Paredes and Rhina Paredes-Greenson, co-founders of the nonprofit. “This pilot continues our mission to collect the data necessary to evolve the standard of care.”

Senate Bill 1135 accentuates evolving American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations that call for all youth to get a heart screening at least every three years, and especially upon entry to middle, junior and high school. The screening pilot would include a cardiac risk assessment followed by an electrocardiogram (ECG), which can identify up to 70% of heart conditions that put youth at risk for SCA and has been established as the most effective heart screening tool.

An estimated 23,000 children under 18 are lost each year to sudden cardiac arrest, making it a leading cause of death in youth. It is the number one killer of student athletes and the leading cause of death on school campuses. Robust cardiac risk assessment screening has become a national movement, evidenced most recently by the National Defense Appropriations Act funding electrocardiogram (ECG) screening among incoming military academy cadets. The Eric Paredes Save A Life Foundation has partnered with local schools to provide 35,000+ free heart screenings to San Diego youth since 2010.