

## INSTRUCTION TO SUBMIT SUPPORT LETTER

1. Augment letter with personal story if applicable and put on your **organization letterhead**
2. **Sign** and date letter
3. Email to [executivedirector@epsavealife.org](mailto:executivedirector@epsavealife.org) who will submit letter on your behalf – OR –
4. [Submit Director Via Senate Position Letter Portal](#)

**DATE**

Senator Akilah Weber Pierson, M.D.  
1021 O Street, Ste. 7310  
Sacramento, California 95814

Support SB945: Expanding CPR/AED Training as a High School Graduation Requirement

Dear Senator Weber Pierson:

With upwards of 356,000 people lost annually to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), among them up to 23,000 youth, coupled with California's persistently low SCA survival rate of just 8.7% (well below the national average), it's time to address this public health crisis by creating a culture of prevention where kids live, learn and play.

It's long been established that in a cardiac emergency immediate bystander intervention with hands-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use of an automated external defibrillator (AED) prior to EMS arrival can increase survival up to 90%. But studies continue to show that most Americans are unprepared to use either measure, evidenced by just 42% of California's SCA victims receiving bystander CPR and 9% a bystander-applied AED.

Current state law for CPR training in schools applies to school districts that mandate a health class as a graduation requirement. Conservatively, at least 40% of California's public and charter high school students — approximately 758,000 out of 1.89 million — do not receive this critical learning, which presents significant health equity disparities across the state's socio-economically diverse school communities.

Among these excluded students, 77% racially or ethnically identify as other than white. In fact, fully 43% of the state's Hispanic high school students and 42% of the state's Black students (compared to 36% of the state's white students) are not benefitting from CPR training. This perpetuates a life-threatening inequity relevant to research that SCA survival by Black or Hispanic individuals or in Black or Hispanic neighborhoods is historically lower than White individuals.

What's more, 65% of the total excluded high school student population qualifies under social-economically disadvantaged (SED) status.

Forty-one states and Washington DC require CPR/AED training for all high school students— it is time for California to do the same. According to the Whole Child framework, schools play a critical role in not only promoting the health and safety of young people but in establishing lifelong behaviors, which is why SB945 seeks to collaborate more comprehensively with schools to advance this public health initiative. SB945 will empower a next generation of life savers with critical cardiac emergency response skills that will benefit their future families, workplaces and communities.

Sincerely,

**MUST SHOW SIGNATURE**  
**NAME**  
**ORGANIZATION**