

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 164

BY SENATOR BROOME

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the feasibility of requiring that automated external defibrillators be placed in every public high school.

WHEREAS, the American Heart Association estimates that approximately 250,000 Americans die each year from sudden cardiac arrest and almost ninety-five percent die before receiving treatment at a hospital; and

WHEREAS, time is of the essence for someone in cardiac arrest as their chance for survival decreases by nearly ten percent for every minute that passes without treatment; and

WHEREAS, the American Heart Association estimates that up to twenty-five percent of the deaths each year that result from cardiac arrest could have been prevented if treatment had been initiated immediately and a defibrillator had been available; and

WHEREAS, an automated external defibrillator is a computerized portable device that talks users through lifesaving steps to deliver an electrical impulse that can bring a dying heart back to a normal rhythm during an incident of cardiac arrest; and

WHEREAS, the reports of student athletes who die of sudden cardiac arrest continue to increase and have caused a number of states, including Ohio, Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Texas, to require public schools to have automated external defibrillators on site; and

WHEREAS, the tragic death of Shannon Veal, standout basketball player for Glen Oaks High School in Baton Rouge, on February 18, 2008, from sudden cardiac arrest suffered while in the midst of playing a game brought this issue to the forefront in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, it is quite possible that the presence of an automated external defibrillator could have prevented the unnecessary and untimely death of this vibrant and promising young woman who was described by her coach as a "MVP at life"; and

WHEREAS, although Shannon's dream of attending college and furthering her basketball career will forever remain unfulfilled, the presence of heart defibrillators in our schools could very well prove to be the difference between life and death for other students.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the feasibility of requiring that automated external defibrillators be placed in every public high school.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a written report of findings and recommendations be submitted to the Senate Committee on Education not later than March 15, 2009.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state superintendent of education, and the executive director of the Louisiana School Boards Association.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE