



**Maine Medical
Association**



**Testimony of the Maine Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics,
Maine Medical Association, and
Maine Osteopathic Association**

**In SUPPORT of LD 587, An Act to Require Athletic Emergency Action Plans for
School-Sponsored Athletic Events**

May 5, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Madeleine DesFosses, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Maine AAP), Maine Medical Association (MMA), and Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA). We are in support of LD 587, An Act to Require Athletic Emergency Action Plans for School-Sponsored Athletic Events, and proposed amendments.

The Maine AAP is a membership organization of 300 pediatricians and subspecialists across the state working to promote the health of Maine children. MMA is a professional organization representing over 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. MOA is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

Each year, thousands of Maine students participate in school sports programs that contribute positively to their physical, social, and mental health. However, sudden cardiac arrest and similar life-threatening emergencies can strike without warning, even among active young athletes. According to the American Heart Association, **more than 23,000 children experience cardiac arrests outside of the hospital each year, and 40% of these incidents are related to school sports.** Having a thorough cardiac emergency response plan in place can mean the difference between life and death.

LD 587 takes a common-sense, evidence-based step forward in ensuring that all schools across the state are prepared to respond effectively to cardiac emergencies during athletic events. By requiring the development, maintenance, and regular rehearsal of cardiac emergency response plans, this bill strengthens the safety net for student athletes and all others present at school-sponsored athletic events.

Importantly, LD 587 promotes equity in safety. While some schools already have comprehensive cardiac emergency response plans in place, others—particularly those with fewer resources—may not. This legislation ensures that all students, regardless of where they live or what school they attend, benefit from a basic standard of emergency preparedness.

Student athletes deserve every opportunity to play in safe environments. LD 587 helps guarantee that in a moment of crisis, the adults around them are not scrambling, but ready to respond and save the life of a young person.

We urge the Committee to vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 587 and proposed amendments.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the health and safety of Maine’s youth.

Madeleine DesFosses

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