

# ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR ASSEMBLY, No. 1608

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 21, 2012

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1608 (ACS).

This bill requires public and nonpublic schools to have and maintain automated external defibrillators and to establish and implement emergency action plans for responding to sudden cardiac events.

The bill requires public school districts and nonpublic schools that include any of the grades kindergarten through 12 to ensure that, beginning September 1, 2014, each public or nonpublic school has an automated external defibrillator available in an unlocked location on school property with an appropriate identifying sign. The bill specifies the defibrillator must be accessible during the school day and any other time a school-sponsored athletic event or team practice is taking place in which pupils are participating. The bill specifies the defibrillator must be within reasonable proximity of the school athletic field or gymnasium.

The bill requires public school districts and nonpublic schools that include any of the grades kindergarten through 12 to ensure that, beginning September 1, 2014, a team coach, licensed athletic trainer, or other designated staff member (if there is no coach or licensed athletic trainer), who is present during the athletic event or team practice, is trained in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and use of a defibrillator. The bill specifies a school district or nonpublic school is in compliance with this requirement if a State-certified emergency services provider or other certified first responder is on site at the event or practice.

The bill requires public school districts and nonpublic schools that include any of the grades kindergarten through 12 to ensure that, beginning September 1, 2014, each defibrillator is tested and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's operational guidelines and notification is provided to the appropriate first aid, ambulance, rescue squad, or other appropriate emergency medical services provider regarding the defibrillator, the type acquired, and its location.

The bill provides that a school district or a nonpublic school and its employees are immune from civil liability in the acquisition and use of a defibrillator.

The bill requires public school districts and nonpublic schools that include any of the grades kindergarten through 12 to establish and implement an emergency action plan to respond to sudden cardiac events. The bill specifies that the plan must be consistent with other provisions of the bill, and must include: a list of not fewer than five school employees, team coaches, or licensed athletic trainers who hold certifications in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and the use of defibrillators from certain recognized training programs; and detailed procedures for responding to sudden cardiac events.

The bill directs the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, to adopt rules and regulations necessary for its implementation.

The bill takes effect immediately upon enactment.

The bill is designated as Janet's Law in memory of Janet Zilinski, an 11-year-old who died of sudden cardiac arrest following a cheerleading squad practice.

#### FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services expects the bill will result in increased costs to public school districts and nonpublic schools required to comply with its provisions, but is unable to determine the magnitude of the increased costs.

The Office of Legislative Services notes the magnitude of the increased costs cannot be determined because it is unclear how many schools do not have defibrillators and will be required to acquire new or additional units, or how many schools have fewer than five staff members who hold certifications in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and the use of defibrillators and will be required to train additional staff to comply with the bill.

Additionally, the increased costs cannot be determined because the cost to purchase each defibrillator and the cost to train each staff member in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and the use of defibrillators are largely unknown. The State currently has a contract with a vendor under which a school district may purchase a defibrillator for \$829 per unit and the associated training for \$58 per trainee. However, the contract expires at the end of fiscal year 2011-2012, and does not include training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

The Office of Legislative Services notes that the bill's requirement that schools maintain defibrillators according to manufacturers' operational guidelines and the requirement that schools establish and implement an emergency action plan may also contribute to increased costs incurred as a result of the bill, but expects those costs to be minimal.