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Mr. Chairman, members of the committee , good morning. My name is Dr. David Slattery, I am an emergency physician at University Medical Center in Las Vegas. I serve as the education director for the department of emergency medicine, I am the immediate past president of the Nevada Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians. I am speaking in support of Assembly Bill 441 on behalf of the American Heart Association. Besides being a board certified emergency physician, I also provide medical oversight for the Automated External Defibrillator programs for the MGM-Mirage Resorts. Because of my experience with the very successful Casino AED project, I would like to not only be here today to speak in support of this bill, but more importantly to be here as a resource to answer any questions the committee may have concerning the implementation, training, or other logistical issues surrounding a successful AED program.

What is SCA?

Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the heart's electrical system, which makes the heart contract at a regular, constant rate, malfunctions. The heart unexpectedly and abruptly stops beating. It is usually caused by an abnormal heart rhythm called ventricular fibrillation. With this arrhythmia, the heart shakes like jelly, and does not effectively pump blood to the body. If this condition is not treated immediately death will result within several minutes. The only effective treatment for SCA is an electrical shock delivered by a defibrillator. CPR is important to help maintain some blood flow to the brain and other vital organs, but it should be pointed out that CPR alone cannot convert a fibrillating heart back to a normal rhythm.

Sudden cardiac arrest strikes about 220,000 people in the US each year. This averages out to about 600 lives lost each day in the US. The average age of sudden cardiac arrest victims is 65, although SCA can strike even the young and the athletic. Nationwide, 90% of all cardiac arrest victims die.

The key to survival from SCA is early defibrillation. Time is critical- for every minute that that passes, survival decreases by about 10 %. Even in areas with the fastest EMS response rates, it still takes a finite amount of time to get a paramedic to the side of a SCA victim. It can take up to 11 minutes for EMS personnel to get to a victim for numerous logistical reasons. Public access defibrillators, such as the one that I am going to show you, are the key to saving lives. These simple devices allow individuals with minimal training to shock SCA victims and drastically improve survival. I mentioned earlier that about 5-10 % of SCA victims survive nationally. There have been several very impressive and successful programs which have deployed AED's. In 2000, the Casino AED project data was published in the NEJM. Security officers were trained to use AEDs and SCA survival rates rose to 59%. Even more impressive is that when SCA was witnessed and the shock was given within 3 minutes of collapse, survival rates rose to 74%! That is the highest success rate published in the medical literature for SCA.

Thank you
David E. Slattery, MD, FACEP

ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY
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SUBMITTED BY: David Slattery