

TALKING POINTS

ASK: THE SMART HEART ACT (H. 3831)

- **Sudden cardiac arrest is a real and urgent risk for kids.** Each year, more than 23,000 children experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital, and it is the leading cause of death for high school athletes.
- **This affects schools and communities across South Carolina.** Over half of South Carolina students participate in at least one school or community sports team, putting students, staff, and families at risk if schools aren't prepared.
- **Preparation saves lives.** Immediate CPR can double or triple survival, and access to an AED can increase survival rates to 70%—but only if there's a clear plan in place.
- **The Smart Heart Act ensures schools are ready to act.** The bill requires schools to have a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan, CPR-trained staff, and access to AEDs so everyone knows what to do in a cardiac emergency.
- **This is a bipartisan solution that's ready to move forward.** The Smart Heart Act passed the South Carolina House unanimously in April 2025 and now awaits action in the Senate, making this the right moment to finish the job.

ASK for SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Will you support convening a hearing for the Smart Heart Act in the Senate Education Committee?

ASK for ALL SENATORS:

Will you support the Smart Heart Act when it comes up for a floor vote?

After you complete your meeting, remember to let us know how it went by snapping this QR code or filling out the form in your folder:



REMEMBER — You do not need to be an expert. Share these key facts and your personal story.

If a lawmaker asks a question you cannot answer, make a note of it and let them know you will follow-up with them.

LEGISLATIVE MEETING TIP SHEET

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- Gather in your group and assign roles. Your meetings will likely be short, so you want to know who will cover which topic—Who will share their story? Who will make the ask? Who will submit the meeting report?

DURING THE MEETING:

- Introduce yourself to the lawmaker and indicate where you live (on what street in his/her district?)
- Share your story to set up the ask
- Let your lawmaker know why you are visiting (make the “asks”)
 - **Deliver the CERP: Smart Heart Act ask**
 - **(If applicable) Share the heated cigarette bill facts**
 - Make it personal—share your own expertise and why these issues matter to you.
 - **Ask your member for their support.**
- Thank them for their time, exchange information, and give them the leave behind.
- Ask for a photo opportunity and post to social media using the #HeartattheCapitol hashtag.

AFTER THE MEETING:

- Compare group notes and assign someone to your meeting report.
- Let AHA staff know if your lawmaker needs more information (provide details if you can).
- Stay in touch with your lawmaker:
 - Follow up with a thank you letter.
 - Make an appointment in your calendar to call the legislator again in a few weeks and plan to check in periodically.
 - If a new piece of information or research is released, send it along to them.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Whether you speak to a legislator or a staff member it will make an impact. Remember to always be friendly and thank them for taking the time to speak with you.
- You can persuade your legislator by presenting facts and resources provided by the AHA.
- Sharing your story can be the most convincing part of the conversation—it makes the issue real to people who may otherwise not have a vested interest.

What to do if your lawmaker is unavailable:

- Leave a note for your lawmaker!
 - Using the notecard in your folder, leave a note with a message like this: *Dear [Representative or Senator Name], I'm a constituent living in Columbia. I'm sorry I missed you today, but I'd like to ask for your support for H. 3831, the Smart Heart Act. You can reach me at 504-606-0834 if you have any questions. Thank you, Aline Stone*
- Leave the leave behind sheets and your note card with your contact information.

Questions? Contact Andrew Wylam (757-813-6410) or Aline Stone (504-606-0834)