

SENATE No. 1027

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Brian A. Joyce

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to prevent sudden cardiac arrest.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Brian A. Joyce

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth

SENATE No. 1027

By Mr. Joyce, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1027) of Brian A. Joyce for legislation to prevent sudden cardiac arrest . Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act to prevent sudden cardiac arrest.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act.

2 SECTION 2. Chapter 111 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition,
3 is hereby amended by inserting after section 222 the following section:-

4 Section 222A. Standards for preventing sudden cardiac arrest and death in student
5 athletes.

6 (a) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall have the following
7 meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

8 “Athletic activity”, all of the following:

9 (1) Interscholastic athletics.

10 (2) An athletic contest or competition, other than interscholastic athletics, sponsored by
11 or associated with a school entity, including cheerleading, club-sponsored sports activities and
12 sports activities sponsored by or associated with a school entity.

13 (3) Noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored by or associated with a school entity.

14 (4) Practices, interschool practices and scrimmages for all of the activities listed under
15 paragraphs (1), (2) and (3).

16 “Department”, the Department of Public Health.

17 “School entity”, all public schools and any school subject to the Massachusetts
18 Interscholastic Athletic Association rules.

19 (b) Educational materials –

20 (1) The departments shall develop and post on their publicly accessible internet website
21 guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and to educate students participating in or
22 desiring to participate in an athletic activity, their parents, their guardians and their coaches about
23 the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest. The guidelines shall include a sudden
24 cardiac arrest symptoms and warning sign information sheet with information on the risks
25 associated with continuing to play or practice after experiencing the following symptoms:
26 fainting, difficulty breathing, chest pains, dizziness and racing heart rate.

27 (2) In developing the guidelines and materials, the department may utilize existing
28 materials developed by organizations, such as Parent Heart Watch and Sudden Arrhythmia Death
29 Syndromes.

30 (3) A student participating in or desiring to participate in an athletic activity and the
31 student’s parent or guardian shall, each school year and prior to participation by the student in an
32 athletic activity, sign and return to the student’s school an acknowledgment of receipt and review
33 of the sudden cardiac arrest symptoms and warning sign information sheet developed under this
34 subsection.

35 (c) A school entity may hold an informational meeting prior to the start of each athletic
36 season for all ages of competitors regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac
37 arrest. In addition to students, parents, guardians, coaches and other school officials,
38 informational meetings may include physicians, pediatric cardiologists and athletic trainers.

39 (d) Removal from play –

40 (1) A student who, as determined by a game official, coach from the student’s team,
41 certified athletic trainer, licensed physician or other official designated by the student’s school,
42 exhibits signs or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest while participating in an athletic activity
43 shall be removed by the coach from participation at that time.

44 (2) If a student is known to have exhibited signs or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest at
45 any time prior to or following an athletic activity, the student shall be prevented from
46 participating in an athletic activity.

47 (3) The student shall not return to participation in an athletic activity until the student is
48 evaluated and cleared, in writing, for return to participation by an appropriate medical
49 professional.

50 (4) In order to help determine whether a student is ready to return to play, the appropriate
51 medical professional may consult any other licensed or certified medical professionals.

52 (e) Training course –

53 (1) Each school year, a coach of an athletic activity shall complete a sudden cardiac arrest
54 training course offered by a provider approved by the department.

55 (2) A coach of an athletic activity shall not coach the athletic activity until the coach
56 completes a training course as required under this subsection.

57 (f) Penalties – The governing school body shall establish the following minimum
58 penalties for a coach found in violation of the requirements under subsection (c), the penalties
59 shall take effect two years following the effective date of this section:

60 (1) For the first violation, a suspension from coaching any athletic activity for the
61 remainder of the season.

62 (2) For a second violation, suspension from coaching any athletic activity for the
63 remainder of the season and for the next season.

64 (3) For a third violation, permanent suspension from coaching any athletic activity.

65 (g) The sponsors of youth athletic activities are encouraged to follow the guidance stated
66 in this section.

67 (h) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create, establish, expand, reduce, contract
68 or eliminate any civil liability on the part of any school entity or school employee.