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147

Senator Rick Uehling

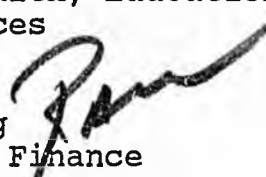
Downtown, Elmendorf, Northeast Anchorage



MEMORANDUM

Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
International Trade & Tourism Committee
State Affairs Committee

To: Senator Paul Fischer
Chairman, Senate Health, Education
and Social Services

From: Senator Rick Uehling 
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance

Subject: SB 147, Operation Quickstart

Date: February 6, 1989

I would appreciate you scheduling SB 147 for a hearing before the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee at the earliest possible time.

SB 147 will fund Operation Quickstart. This appropriation will purchase sophisticated defibrillators to provide Anchorage firefighters with equipment the Fire Department estimates could save as many as nine lives every year.

This program is a priority of the Municipality of Anchorage and will allow fire stations without paramedic units to carry improved equipment and provide quicker defibrillation to cardiac arrest victims. Operation Quickstart requires no new personnel.

Since paramedic units only operate in five of Anchorage's eleven fire stations, there is often an engine company closer to the scene of a cardiac arrest than paramedics. Research indicates that resuscitation rates increase dramatically as rescuers reduce their response times. An average response time reduction of three minutes, as anticipated by the Fire Department, could make the difference between life and death for nine cardiac arrest victims every year.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I have also attached backup materials for your committee files.

Municipality of Anchorage



FIRE DEPARTMENT
Administration
(1301 East 80th Avenue)

P.O. BOX 196650
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99519-6650
(907) 267-4900

TOM FINK,
MAYOR

JAN 10 1989

January 3, 1989

Senator Rick Uehling
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Ak. 99811

Dear Senator Uehling,

Enclosed is a description of Operation QuickStart, an important new program that our Department is beginning to implement now. To finish it, we need your support for a small capital appropriation (about \$50,000) in the FY 90 budget. Mayor Fink has included it in the Municipal capital improvements list.

Operation QuickStart is a life safety program, and one that offers more productivity gain - more bang for the buck - than anything we've come across in a long time. I hope to have a chance to speak with you personally in Juneau early in the session and demonstrate the semi-automatic defibrillator we will be using.

In the meantime, you would do us a favor by reviewing the program description. I'll be happy to answer any questions you have, now or in Juneau.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chris Bushue, Paramedic
Project Coordinator
267-4945 / 272-2111

Municipality of Anchorage



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TOM FINK,
MAYOR

FIRE DEPARTMENT
Administration
(1301 East 80th Avenue)

Operation QuickStart

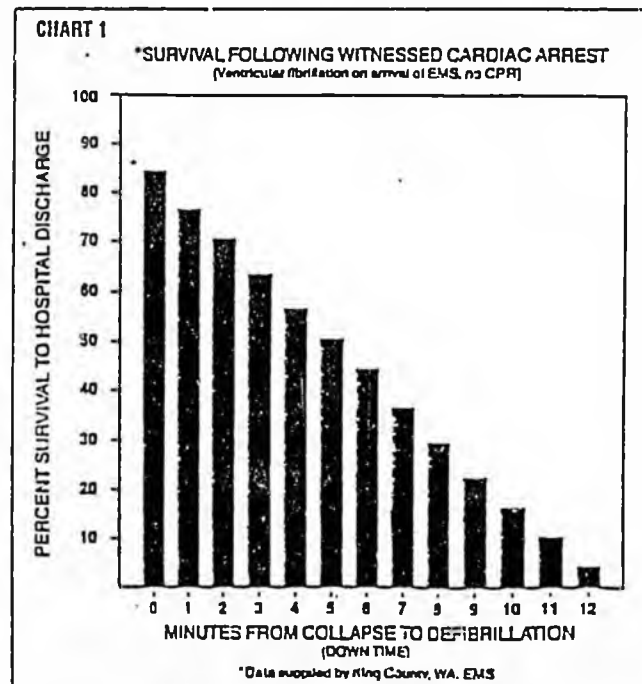
Anchorage Fire Department emergency crews respond to approximately 60 cardiac arrests each year. Of those, we find about half in a heart rhythm known as ventricular fibrillation - a chaotic twitching (fibrillation) of the heart's large pumping chambers (ventricles), which does not pump blood.

Ventricular "fib" is a very treatable condition. It accounts for the majority of cardiac arrest saves - successful resuscitations - both in and out of the hospital. Medical research has proven that the single greatest determining factor in a "V. Fib." patient's chance of survival is the rapid administration of *defibrillation*, an electrical shock applied to the patient's chest.

Early defibrillation is so effective that save rates in-hospital, where the patient can be defibrillated immediately, can reach 80-90%. Success rates out of hospital are inevitably lower because of inherent delays as bystanders contact 911 and emergency crews respond to the scene. In Anchorage, Fire Department paramedics still manage a 49% success rate in restoring the heartbeat to patients found in V. Fib.

This is a figure the Department is proud of, but there is a way to improve it significantly. Of Anchorage's 11 fire stations, paramedic units operate out of only five. There is often an engine company closer to the scene of a cardiac arrest than paramedics are. On average, in fact, engine companies are three minutes closer to medical emergencies.

The research findings mentioned above indicate that the improvement in resuscitation rates rises steadily by 5% for each minute pared off of the arrest-to-resuscitation interval. (See graph.)



For Anchorage, it is cost prohibitive to add paramedic units to reduce cardiac arrest response times, but the national EMS and fire service communities have devised an economical alternative. Specially trained "first responders" such as our firefighters can perform this critical early step in resuscitation using an automatic defibrillator with computer circuitry that analyzes cardiac rhythm before it delivers a shock.

In Anchorage, the plan will be both efficient and effective. The one-time equipment cost totals less than \$70,000 (of which approximately \$20,000 has already been covered by FY 89 reappropriations) and the plan requires no additional personnel. The average three minute improvement in time-to-defibrillation, according to research, stands to make the difference between life and death for 9 cardiac arrest victims a year in the Municipality.

The Fire Department feels that its rapid defibrillation project, Operation QuickStart, is tailor made for the do-more-with-less times that Alaska faces in FY 90. Mayor Fink has signified his agreement by placing the project on the Municipality's capital improvements list. We are implementing the pilot phase on three engine companies in the first quarter of calendar 1989. We need your support for the modest capital outlay needed to deliver the remainder of Operation QuickStart in FY 90.

POSITION PAPER

SENATE BILL NO. 147

For an Act Entitled: "An Act making a special appropriation for payment as a grant to the Municipality of Anchorage for defibrillation equipment for operation quickstart; and providing for an effective date."

SB 147 would appropriate the sum of \$50,000 from the general fund to the Department of Administration for payment as a grant under AS 37.05.315 to the Municipality of Anchorage for defibrillation equipment for operation quickstart.

The goal of operation quickstart is to equip firefighter first responders in all fire stations with automatic or semi-automatic external defibrillators to reduce response times to defibrillation for cardiac arrest victims. Currently, the Municipality of Anchorage has 11 fire stations and five paramedic units. In many instances firefighters from the nearest fire station can reach the scene of a cardiac arrest faster than a paramedic unit. Currently, most firefighters can only do basic life support CPR until the paramedics arrive. Under operation quickstart, the firefighters will have available an automatic or semi-automatic defibrillator which can identify and countershock life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias using a built in computer program. In FY 89, funds for defibrillators for three of the fire stations were appropriated by the legislature.

According to a study published in the September 15, 1988 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine, in Seattle, Washington, firefighters arriving first on the scene who were equipped with automatic external defibrillators saved 30 percent of cardiac arrest victims, as compared to only a 19 percent save rate when the firefighters delivered only basic CPR. A save was defined as a patient who survived to hospital discharge. In both groups, paramedics arrived at the scene within a few minutes after the firefighters. Paramedics then provide more sophisticated advanced life support care enroute to the hospital.

Since heart disease is the second highest cause of death in Alaska, this operation quickstart program in Anchorage could

help save many lives. According to the 1985 Alaska Vital Statistics Report, there were 148 heart disease deaths in Anchorage.

Position

The Department of social Services supports passage of this bill for the following reasons:

- 1) Heart disease is a major cause of death in Anchorage; and
- 2) The Operation Quickstart program holds promise of saving significantly more cardiac arrest victims than the current EMS system.

Recommended: Elizabeth A. Ward
Elizabeth Ward, M.N., Director
Division of Public Health

Date: February 24, 1989

Approved: Myra M. Manson
Myra M. Manson, Commissioner
Department of Health and
Social Services

Date: March 9, 1989

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____ Agency Affected: Health & Social Services
 Title: An Act making a special BRU: Health Grants
appropriation ... defibrillation equip.
 Sponsor: Uehling Components: EMS
 Requestor: (S) HESS

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

| OPERATING | FY 89 | FY 90 | FY 91 | FY 92 | FY 93 | FY 94 |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| PERSONAL SERVICES | | | | | | |
| TRAVEL | | | | | | |
| CONTRACTUAL | | | | | | |
| SUPPLIES | | | | | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | | | | | |
| LAND & STRUCTURES | | | | | | |
| GRANTS, CLAIMS | | | | | | |
| MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | | |
| TOTAL OPERATING | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |

| | | | | | | |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CAPITAL | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

| | | | | | | |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| REVENUE | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| GENERAL FUND | | | | | | |
| FEDERAL FUNDS | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |

POSITIONS:

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| FULL-TIME | | | | | | |
| PART-TIME | | | | | | |
| TEMPORARY | | | | | | |

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: Elizabeth Ward, Director Phone: 465-3090
 Division: Public Health Date: 5/6/89
 Approved by Commissioner: Myra M. Munson Date: 3/6/89
 Agency: Department of Health and Social Services

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