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## The American Heart Association recognizes Wyoming as the First State to Meet STEMI Designations & Development Protocols

*And the **third state** to meet AHA metrics around stroke designation and transport protocols*

**Cheyenne, WY – March 13, 2015** – Late Monday night, Governor Matt Mead signed Senate File 88 into law, requiring local Emergency Medical Services authorities to work with the Wyoming Department of Health to develop triage and transport protocols for Stroke and ST segment elevation myocardial infarction – commonly referred to as STEMI– patients, and to include acute stroke ready hospitals in the hospital designation process across the state.

Every day in Wyoming, approximately 51 people are diagnosed with heart disease, putting them at a greater risk of experiencing a heart attack or sudden cardiac arrest; and each year, hundreds of thousands of Americans suffer a STEMI, the most deadly form of heart attack. Stroke is the leading cause of disability and No. 5 cause of death in the United States.

With this new law, Wyoming becomes the first state in the country to meet the American Heart Association metrics for hospital designations of “STEMI” Receiving or Referring centers and the development of EMS treatment/transport protocols, and the third state to meet AHA metrics for hospital designations as Comprehensive Stroke Centers, Acute Stroke Ready Hospitals and EMS treatment/transport protocols.

"The far flung population of Wyoming presents unique challenges in developing systems of care for stroke and heart attack," said David Wheeler MD, PhD, Medical Director at Wyoming Medical Center's Primary Stroke Center and American Heart Association SouthWest Affiliate Board Member. "I am grateful for the work our legislators have done to give us critical tools that we can use to help guide emergency medical services and our sister hospitals throughout the state in their quests to deliver the best care to every patient, every time. Over the past several years Wyoming has taken gigantic strides with great purpose toward a truly integrated and effective statewide system of care for our citizens with cerebrovascular and heart disease."

Senate File 88, authored by Senator Craft and Representative Kasperick, sailed through the Senate in January with a unanimous vote in the Senate Labor, Health and Social Services Committee and on the Senate floor. In mid-February, it passed unanimously in the House Labor, Health and Social Services Committee and then passed the House floor, 55-4. Senate File 88 will take effect in Wyoming on July 1, 2015.

“Over one hundred volunteers have been working for 2+ years to develop and coordinate an improved system of care for victims of serious heart attacks across the State of Wyoming,” said Dr. Michael Eisenhauer, Cardiologist, and American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline Wyoming Stakeholder Co-Chair. “As a group, we are most gratified to see that the Wyoming Legislature has acknowledged the significance of coordinating care for time-sensitive critical illnesses such as heart attack, stroke, and trauma, and look forward to working with the State Department of Health to even further improve healthcare delivery issues across our great State. There can be no question that lives are saved by these kinds of initiatives!”

### **About the American Heart Association**

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America’s No. 1 and No. 5 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The SouthWest Affiliate serves a 6-state region: Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Wyoming. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter