

PRESS RELEASE

KARNATAKA TO BE THE FIRST STATE TO ENACT GOOD SAMARITAN LAW

Bengaluru, November 10, 2016: Karnataka is set to become the first state in India to enact a Good Samaritan Law with the State Cabinet giving its approval for “Karnataka Good Samaritan and Medical Professional (Protection and Regulation during Emergency Situations) Bill” yesterday.

[According to the official twitter account of Chief Minister of Karnataka](#), Siddaramaiah, the decision was taken in a cabinet meeting held yesterday and the Bill is likely to be tabled in the next assembly session starting from November 21 this month. The Bill, drafting of which was supported by SaveLIFE Foundation, aims to provide protection to Good Samaritans, who come to the aid of victims of road accident and other emergency situations, from ensuing legal and procedural hassles.

Once passed, this Bill will give legislative backing to the landmark judgment of the Supreme Court dated March 30, 2016, in the matter *SaveLIFE Foundation versus Union of India*, in which the apex court gave “force of law” to the guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

In the absence of an efficient Emergency Medical Services system in India, bystanders can play a crucial role in providing assistance to victims within the first one hour. In fact, the Law Commission of India had noted in its 201st report that over 50 percent of road accident deaths can be averted with timely medical care within the first one hour. Considering that Karnataka is one of the top 5 states in road accidents deaths in India with over 10,800 people being killed in 2015 alone, the proposed legislation will potentially save over 5000 lives annually.

Piyush Tewari, Founder and CEO of SaveLIFE Foundation said, *“We thank the Karnataka Cabinet for this momentous decision. This law will strengthen the framework outlined by the Honorable Supreme Court to protect Good Samaritans from legal and procedural hassles and provides a path for its effective implementation. We hope that other States will follow Karnataka's lead and enact the Good Samaritan Law to enable bystander care and save lives.”*

Besides protecting a Good Samaritan from any criminal or civil liability which may arise out of helping an injured victim, the Bill addresses key issues that make bystanders refrain from coming forward to help- detention at hospitals, harassment by police, repeated court appearances, and to be compelled to be a witness in the matter. The Bill also provides protection to medical professionals during their examination as a witness.