



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

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**Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, for the record, I am Representative Paul Davis and I am here today to testify in support of House Bill 5786 "An Act Concerning the Assault of a Sports Official". I have been involved in organized sports at all levels for more than 35 years as both a coach and official. Currently, I serve as the head coach of girls swimming at Amity High School and a high school boys swimming referee. I am on the Executive Committee of the Connecticut High School Coaches Association and serve on the CIAC Girls Swimming Committee as Coaches Chair. I am also a member of the Connecticut Swimming Officials Association and the National Federation of High School Officials Association.**

**As more and more people watch and participate in various sports, officials who supervise the competition serve an ever-increasing role of importance. If participants and spectators are to enjoy a competition under the safest conditions, officials must enforce rules in much the same manner that police enforce laws. A knowledgeable and well-trained official can make a major difference in controlling the conditions under which competition takes place. At the same time, officials are the most physically endangered by the emotional outbursts of athletes, coaches, and (or) spectators at an intense competition.**

**Individuals who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of providing a fair, safe, and level playing field for our local athletes need to know that we care about their safety and wish them to continue their service. We can do this through passage of HB 5786.**

**At least twenty states have already passed legislation to protect athletic officials. The time has come for Connecticut to do the same! I urge your favorably consideration of this measure.**