

Testimony Regarding

Bill No. 5354 – AN ACT CONCERNING ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Paul Mengold and I am currently the Director of Athletics for the Amity Regional School District serving the towns of Woodbridge, Orange and Bethany. My school system offers a comprehensive athletic program for 1 regional high school and 2 regional middle schools that offer 29 varsity athletic programs with 105 coaches and services 1,209 high school students and more than 500 middle school students.

The administration and success of this entire program is my primary responsibility. Having said that I have been an athletic director for more than 28 years and during that time my job has been tremendously impacted by significant legislation and as a result the role of the athletic director has increased considerably. The athletic director has to insure that every coach in their program possesses a coaching permit required by law and that those permits are maintained by ongoing CEU's. Most athletic directors attend specific professional development training in order to provide those CEU's to their own staff at no cost.

In 2010, legislation required the education of coaches specific to concussions and the recognition of such injuries. In 2005 legislation was enacted requiring ALL coaches be evaluated. Other issues such as hazing and bullying, harassment, unreasonable parents, and state association requirements, etc. have also increased the duties of the athletic director position. The main focus of the athletic director is to provide a safe and healthy environment for each and every student athlete. It is a travesty that the position of Athletic Director exists in every school in Connecticut that provides an athletic program and has so many state regulated mandates to deal with and yet there is absolutely no definition of the position in any state statute.

There has been much work nationally to define the position and it's time that Connecticut does so as well.

Therefore, because this position has a direct impact on student safety it should not only be defined in the state statutes but the qualifications should be set much higher than a mere coaching permit. I would like to suggest a change in Bill 5354 as it is currently written to the following:

In Line 17 after "statutes" delete ", (2)" and add "and "

In Line 18-20 delete "an athletic administrator permit issued by the State Board of education, pursuant to section 2 of this act." And add " (2) a Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) certificate from the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA), or the equivalent, from another program with full registration from the National Certification Commission, as approved by the State Department of Education."

In Line 25 - delete "." and add "or a person may hold a Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) certificate from the NIAAA, or the equivalent, from another program with full registration from the National Certification Commission, as approved by the State Board of Education."

In Lines 26-29 –Delete lines 26-29 and replace with "(d) Any person who holds the position of director of athletics on or before July 1, 2012 shall not be subject to the provisions of this section"

I urge you to support Bill No. 5354 with our suggested amendment and help Connecticut define and elevate the qualifications' of the Athletic Directors position.

Sincerely,
Paul Mengold, CAA
Amity Regional High School