



**Connecticut State Medical Society
Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Physicians
Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons
Testimony on Senate Bill 185 An Act Concerning Notice to Parents of Student Athletes
about Concussions and Head Injuries**

**Public Health Committee
March 7, 2012**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the more than 8,500 physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and the Connecticut Chapters of the American College of Physicians and American College of Surgeons, thank you to present this testimony to you today on **Senate Bill 185 An Act Concerning Notice to Parents of Student Athletes about Concussions and Head Injuries**.

Members of the CSMS Committee on Sports Injuries were active and instrumental in the original passage of legislation protecting our young athletes from further head injuries by prematurely allowing return to action. Additionally, processes were put in place to ensure that coaches and other personnel were educated in preventing, identifying and mitigating the effects of concussions. Expanding language to include notification to parents of the potential dangers of such injuries is a logical step in the progression of comprehensive policy.

However, in addition to the language contained within the bill before you, we respectfully request that the committee make a minor amendment to the underlying Public Act. Currently, Section 2 of the act reads as follows:

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) (1) The coach of any intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body, or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred.

(2) The coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete receives written clearance to participate in such supervised team activities involving physical exertion from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

The underlined language has unfortunately caused inconsistency in application of the law as various school boards with various legal counsels have interpreted the language in a different manner. While we appreciate the intent to specify a certain level of training on the part of the professional, we urge the committee to remove the statement and replace it with the ability of a licensed physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse. This will eliminate inconsistencies in interpretation and

we remain confident that professionals will use their personal judgment regarding their levels of training in the evaluation and management of concussions prior to making any decision that could impact the health and well being of our young athletes.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today.