

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

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Testimony Regarding

House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Elizabeth Remigino-Knapp and I am the Athletic Director for the West Hartford School District, having served in the role for the past seventeen years. This testimony is written in support of the long overdue House Bill 6383 that defines the position of Athletic Director and sets new standards for hiring individuals that would serve in our role. The responsibilities of athletic directors have increased over the past decade including those that are defined by the physical nature of the sports we administrate as well as the subjective influence of social media and fan behavior. The physical nature of our sport dictates a major influence on student-athlete safety, from concussion prevention and treatment to crowd control. The athletic director is also a human resource manager who is required to ensure that coaches are certified according to current law as well as promotion of CEU programs within current legislation. As an athletic director I am also responsible for frequent interaction with parents about issues other than disagreement about coaching decisions such as hazing, bullying, harassment and the use of electronic and social media. Our daily concern of student-athlete safety is impacted by weather, facility maintenance and scheduling of travel. As an athletic director there is also a constant effort to ensure good sportsmanship and fair play are being taught and that a safe and healthy environment exists for all student-athletes.

While I support the majority of the language written in House Bill 6383 I feel it is incomplete since it does not address those of us who were hired under a previous set of standards. I believe that it would be in the best interests of all those impacted by the new standards that individuals should be exempt from the new standards due to our pre-existing conditions of employment. The addition of a grandfather clause would be a way to minimize the harmful effects of new standards by limiting its application in cases where it would do more harm than good.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Remigino-Knapp
Director of Athletics, West Hartford Public School