

Testimony for HB 5113

Dear Legislator,

My name is Grant Manning and I have been coach and soccer referee for 21 years in the town of Glastonbury where I live. I am writing to express my concern regarding HB 5113 - an act concerning youth athletics and concussion.

While everyone connected with youth athletics is concerned about the safety of the players, HB 5113 as drafted is ill conceived and takes a "one size fits all" approach. It will result in numerous unintended consequences that will be detrimental to youth sports. Specifically, mandating additional requirements for referees, who are independent contractors, and increasing the liability exposure for these individuals who serve high school and youth sports, will have a major negative impact.

There is a shortage of referees and HB 5113, as drafted, is certain to be a deterrent to attracting new officials and keeping the ones we have. Several states have laws that extend immunity to officials against law suits to reduce their liability, this proposed law would increase the exposure for officials in Connecticut, which would be devastating.

The dedicated teenagers, men and women serve the sport not only for the fee involved, but also for the love of the game and to help our youth. In short, although this proposed legislation is very well intended, HB 5113 should not be passed as drafted. It is not in the best interest of high school or youth sports. Thank you for the opportunity to express my views.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Manning PhD.