



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**John L. Cattelan**  
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**H.B. 5113, AN ACT CONCERNING**  
**YOUTH ATHLETICS AND CONCUSSIONS**  
**Children Committee**  
**February 27, 2014**

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Children Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is John Cattelan and I am here today on behalf of the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs. The Alliance represents 22 YMCAs across the state of Connecticut.

I'm here today to raise concerns regarding H.B. 5113, An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions.

The Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs is mindful of the growing awareness among parents and coaches, and the public as a whole, about the need for individuals with a suspected head injury to be removed from a game or practice, and seek medical attention. We take the issue of concussions and head injuries, in particular with our youth, very seriously.

We do not object to the distribution of educational materials to volunteer coaches, referees and parents, as long as they are easily accessible. We also support the removal of a youth athlete from a practice or game if they receive significant contact to the head area. We do have concerns with requiring volunteer coaches and referees to attend a training course and believe the review of educational materials should suffice.

The Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs is concerned about the possible perception that a volunteer coach or referee would be expected make a judgment that is designated for a medical professional. This may have some unintended consequences that negatively impact our volunteers, coaches and organization.

We strongly oppose legislative language that allows the Attorney General to bring a civil action in the superior court against an operator or coach. Our youth sports programs already have a very difficult time in recruiting volunteers to coach and referee. We feel this would only exasperate this problem and we are obviously concerned about the possibility of litigation.

The Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs supports the overall intentions of the bill and recognizes the severity of this issue. However, we would urge the members of the Children Committee to make this legislation easier to implement without placing a burden on our organization.