

Testimony for HB 5113

Dear Legislator,

My name is Rocco Sanzo. I am a certified official and referee and belong to the Central Connecticut Association of Football Officials. I am writing to express my concern for HB 5113- AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH ATHLETICS AND CONCUSSION

It is important for you to understand that the role of the referees are to fairly and impartially enforce the NFHS playing rules while helping to ensure that the games are conducted in a safe environment to minimize risks for the participants. The NFHS 'concussion rule" does not create a duty that officials are expected to perform a medical diagnosis. Referees are simply being asked to use their best judgment in observing and being more cognizant of athletes that may be displaying signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with concussion, and stop play to provide the opportunity for the athlete to be properly checked by the individuals in charge of their care.

To prepare for this role, each year the officials are required to complete in -service training clinics, and an annual examination on the NFHS rules, including an annual review in recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussions in accordance with NFHS rules in all sports. To assist local and state official's boards, the CIAC has provided concussion cards that contain the signs and symptoms of concussion and other pertinent information and a protocol for officials to follow for all injuries, including concussions.

The officials in our state are dedicated men and women who serve the sport(s) in which they officiate, not for the fee involved, but rather 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.

Regards,
Rocco Sanzo