



Sports Legacy Institute
230 Second Avenue, Suite 200
Waltham, MA 02451
(781) 819-5706
SportsLegacy.org

February 17, 2015

Re: Letter of Support – HB 6722

To the Distinguished members of the Children's Committee:

The Sports Legacy Institute, a 501(c)(3) organization that strives to advance the study, treatment, and prevention of brain trauma in athletes and other at-risk groups, strongly supports the enactment of House Bill 6722.

Concussion is an invisible injury that can derail a child's future. Because there is no simple tests to objectively determine when an athlete has suffered a concussion, and because we do not provide doctors and athletic trainers on the sideline at most youth sports events, the best way to ensure a child's concussion is recognized and responded to appropriately is through education of athletes, coaches, and parents as well as management by a health care professional.

According to the Aspen Institute: Project Play, only 24% of youth coaches are trained in concussion management. Five to 20% of contact sports athletes will suffer a concussion *each season*. It is unacceptable that we would allow them to suffer so many brain injuries without training their coaches to recognize concussions.

Studies also show that with delayed symptoms, concussions are frequently not diagnosed until hours later or even the next day. Therefore, parents need to be educated. Studies also find that the average child believes a concussion has to require loss of consciousness. They will never report a headache or "seeing stars" unless we teach them that those are important symptoms.

We rarely have opportunities to create so much good with no financial or social cost.

On behalf of the Sports Legacy Institute, we strongly urge you to pass House Bill 6722.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Nowinski", written in a cursive style.

Chris Nowinski
Co-Founder and Executive Director
The Sports Legacy Institute