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**H.B. 5141**

**AN ACT CONCERNING CONCUSSIONS AND YOUTH ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES  
CONDUCTED ON PUBLIC ATHLETIC FIELDS**  
**February 16, 2016**

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and Members of the Children Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on H.B. 5141, An Act Concerning Concussions and Youth Athletic Activities Conducted on Public Athletic Fields. 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.

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 strongly support the distribution of educational materials to volunteer coaches,

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as long as they are easily accessible. However, the ability to track if each volunteer coach participated in such a training would require a financial investment by Connecticut's YMCAs and is also an administrative concern. In addition, the ability to obtain a parent's or legal guardian's signature would also require a financial investment by Connecticut's YMCAs.

We have over 7,500 volunteers in Connecticut and a majority of those volunteers serve as coaches. We are concerned regarding the ability to find volunteer coaches if there are additional requirements placed on their already valuable, but limited time. We are still trying to get our hands around the notion that a volunteer coach should be treated in the same realm as a paid High School coach.

The Ys in Connecticut have been encouraged by Y-USA to adopt a policy that states any participant in a YMCA physical activity program who is suspected of having a concussion should be removed from the program and may not return until evaluated by and given written clearance from a qualified health care professional.

The Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs supports the overall intentions of the bill and recognizes the severity of this issue. We look forward to working with the members of the Children's Committee on this important legislation.