

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5240

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF YOUTH
Title: AND INTRAMURAL AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETES.

Vote Date: 3/10/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/1/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

H.B. 5240 will assemble a task force to examine safety protocols in youth sports leagues and intramural and interscholastic athletics. This bill gathers a group of individuals with knowledge regarding safety protocols in youth sports who will be able to assess current safety protocols and determine if changes need to be implemented in order to ensure safe athletic experiences for children. It has come to light that practices vary significantly between public and private schools and as well as various sports leagues, and more information is needed to determine if injuries have been associated with specific equipment uses or policies so that best practices can be extrapolated and potentially recommended.

Proposed substitute language outlines the roles of the task force and articulates specific studies to be conducted, such as the efficacy and safety of the use of neck guards in youth, intramural and interscholastic ice hockey, and the best practices for injury prevention and safety protocols, by comparing the best practices across the state to identify areas for improvement. The proposed substitute language also states that any athletic program operated by a private entity may adopt the recommendations of the task force.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

All committee members of the Committee on Children voted in support of this bill.

Dr. Glenn Lungarini, Executive Director of Connecticut Association of Schools/ CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference supports the bill with the recommendation that the committee consider similar raised bills from other legislative committees and recommends that the committee considered the scope of work to be completed by January 1, 2023 for a detailed review of select sport protocols.

Zachary McKeown, Senior Legislative Associate of CT Conference of Municipalities supports the bill, supporting efforts to protect youth participants in the best manner possible, and thanks the committee for bringing all stakeholders together.

Perry M. Siegel, President of Connecticut Athletic Trainers' Association supports the bill, recommending further collaboration with similar bills, like Raised House Bill 5156, "An Act Considering Requiring the Use of Neck Guards in Hockey", and encourages further discussion of the bill.

Valerie Stolfi-Collins, Executive Director of Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association, supports the bill with the recommendation that the language reflects language from the Connecticut Concussion Task Force.

Stephen Meskers, Representative of the Connecticut General Assembly, supports the bill and believes that establishing a task force will prevent simple oversights like the mandatory use of neck guards in youth hockey. He recommends that the individual schools are brought along on a consulting basis, to review the safety protocols.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Molly Lukiwsky

Date: 3/15/2022