

WICOMICO COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1015 Beaglin Park Drive

Salisbury, Maryland 21804

PHONE (410) 677-5144 FAX (410) 677-5105

Bryan D. Ashby, Supervisor of Athletics

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March 21, 2023

I oppose HB 0343 for the following reasons:

- HB 343 places a burden on school athletic directors on explaining to the student-athletes and coaches of their school why the sport of basketball can play in unlimited showcase tournaments or have additional opportunities not provided to other sports and student-athletes. This in itself creates division and inequitable opportunities among our student athletes.
- HB 343 would supersede current COMAR language, thus removing the interscholastic athletic administrators from amending and modifying language. Legislating high school sports to this nature takes away the administrative control of the 24 local educational agencies administrators for interscholastic athletics who best know how to educate, coach, and mentor through education-based athletic programs.
- HB 343 places the burden on local educational agencies supervisors of athletics and athletic directors to determine if tournaments or showcases are bon-a-fide events and whether the teams they compete against have equivalent standards by superseding COMAR language on out-of-season participations, MPSSAA Sanctioning, and COMAR rules on eligible participants.
- HB 343 does not authorize state tournament games for basketball or a tournament consisting of six games, which is the maximum number of games a team could play in the state tournament. The current MPSSAA State Basketball Championships are provided in an open tournament format and are organized by the MPSSAA and its member schools.
- HB 343 does not authorize city, county, and conference championships nor does it allow for additional postponed contests to be played in addition to the weekly limitations. County championships are integral to the strength within each conference and are high anticipated by our individual communities.
- HB0343 does not provide oversight regarding rules and regulations which are not outlined in the bill, as this house bill supersedes COMAR language. This ensures compliance with season and weekly limitations, out-of-season practice, and sets a fair and equitable standard for statewide participation. It is unclear who enforces weekly and seasonal limitations and what penalties are applied for violations.

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- The legislation of this nature is precedent setting and could lead to additional legislation for the other 22 administered high school sports and shows a prioritization of one sport over the others. This would be disastrous to high school athletics within the State of Maryland.

Sincerely,



Bryan D. Ashby