

**Emily Tarsell, LCPC**

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**2314 Benson Mill Road  
Sparks, Maryland 21152**

February 21, 2024

**HB 686 - Favorable  
Youth Sports Programs – Venue Specific Emergency Action Plans –  
Requirements**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and HGO Committee Delegates,

I am Emily Tarsell, a mother, licensed mental health counselor and President of Health Choice Maryland. We urge your support for HB686.

According to Stanford Medicine for Children, about 3.5 million children and adolescents ages 14 and younger get hurt annually playing sports or participating in recreational activities. Sports and recreational activities contribute to approximately 21 percent of all traumatic brain injuries among American children and adolescents.[1]

Also in recent years, there have been news reports of sudden death on the playing field. Since the nationally televised cardiac arrest of NFL player Damar Hamlin in January 2023, commotio cordis has come to the forefront of public attention. Commotio cordis is defined as sudden cardiac arrest resulting in ventricular fibrillation tachycardia. It is the third most common cause of sudden cardiac death in young athletes, with more than 75% of cases occurring during organized and recreational sporting events. [2]

In addition, The National Institute of Health (NIH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) acknowledge a causal relationship between COVID 19 vaccination and myocarditis, a frequent cause of unexpected cardiac arrest among young people. [3,4,5,6] Given the widespread vaccination of youth with COVID 19 vaccines, and the finding that “myocarditis is an important but under-recognized cause of sudden death in young people including competitive athletes”, it behoves sports programs to be prepared. [7]

Survival is closely tied to how quickly victims receive cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillation. This is a timely bill to raise awareness that would require sports programs to develop emergency action plans for prompt and potentially life saving interventions.

Please vote **Favorable for HB 686**

Thank you.

Emily Tarsell

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## References

[1] Stanford Medicine

<https://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=sports-injuries-statistics-90-P01650#:~:text=Injury%20rates%3A,or%20participating%20in%20recreational%20activities.>

[2] 1 [Laura Trollinger Derry](#),1 [Vidhushei Yogeswaran](#),2 and [Theodore Peng](#)3,4 Commotio Cordis in 2023. *Sports Med.* 2023; 53(8): 1527–1536. Published online 2023 Jun 29. doi: [10.1007/s40279-023-01873-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40279-023-01873-6)

Pub Med Central <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10356869/>

[3]<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-10928-z>

[4] National Library of Medicine <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10043280/>

[5] National Institute of Health <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9905103/>

[6] Vaccine and Immunization CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/myocarditis.html>

[7] **Sudden Unexpected Death Due to Myocarditis in Young People, Including Athletes.**

[Kevin M Harris](#) 1, [Shannon Mackey-Bojack](#) 2, [Mosi Bennett](#) 3, [Darlington Nwaudu](#) 3, [Emily Duncanson](#) 2, [Barry J Maron](#) 4 PMID: 33347841 DOI: [10.1016/j.amjcard.2020.12.028](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjcard.2020.12.028)

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33347841/#:~:text=In%20conclusion%2C%20myocarditis%20is%20an,index%20of%20suspicion%20for%20diagnosis.>