

Charles D. Shuttles

15 Butterwick CT
Montgomery Village, MD 20886

January 7, 2021

The Honorable Obie Patterson

201 James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Patterson,

I'm writing you in support of SB-0028 that you have sponsored along with Senators Beidle, Benson, Cassilly, Ellis, Feldman, Guzzone, Klausmeier, and West that will enhance penalties for those who harass or assault sports officials, in line with what more than 24 other states have already done.

As a youth and adult soccer referee, I've seen firsthand the problems caused when we can't recruit and retain sports officials because of the increasingly difficult environments a handful of spectators have sometimes created at sporting events. I realize that this type of bill won't be the end of bad behavior completely, but it would put a spotlight on a growing problem in Maryland and will only help bring awareness to the issue as well as support recruitment of officials.

Some of the acts that I have personally experienced or witnessed as a referee that I hope the stiffened penalties would discourage are as follows:

- After cautioning an adult recreational indoor soccer player for a reckless foul, the player yelled expletives at me and intentionally bumped into me. After ejecting the player from the field and facility I was informed by the staff that the player has a history of altercations with referees.
- An adult indoor soccer goalie was so upset at a referee for calling a penalty kick that he kicked a ball into the ceiling directly above the referee and players with such force that it, *luckily*, only set off the fire sprinkler system (*rather than knocking down light fixtures or heavy insulation*); requiring an emergency response from the local fire department and closure of the facility for the night.
- A spectator that was directed to leave the sidelines of a soccer match at a competitive U16 youth soccer game took a box filled with empty water bottles and threw them on the field in the direction of the referee while screaming expletives.

-
- At a competitive U12 youth soccer game, a referee that enforced league rules requiring the cancellation of a game for the failure of one team to present required player identification cards, was pursued around the field for 10 minutes by angry parents and coaches to the point that he called police and began filming the parents with his cell phone for his own protection.

While the above incidents are a pale comparison to the violent attacks on Maryland sport officials (e.g., December 2019 UPSL referee assault with injuries), they are an indication that we need meaningful changes to the consequences should the above behaviors escalate. Additionally, I'm struck by the truly negative impact to sports both in Maryland and nationally that sports official abuse has led to and noted in a survey by the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO):

- The average age of sports officials across the country is 53 years old
- Nearly 48% of male officials and 45% of female officials have felt unsafe or feared for their safety in connection to officiating.
- 57% of sports officials believe that sportsmanship is getting worse. Youth, adult recreation, and high school levels are identified as the worst sportsmanship levels.
- Parents (40%), coaches (30%) and fans (18%) cause the most sportsmanship problems.
- 43% of officials and officiating leaders believe that most new officials quit within the first 1-3 years.
- 13% of officials have been assaulted by either a fan, coach, or player.
- The average starting age for a sports official is now 40-45 years old. Thirty years ago, the average starting age for a sports official was 20-25 years old.

It is my hope that SB-00028 will be passed into law and that sports leagues across Maryland will educate all levels of competition that we do not tolerate the abuse of sports officials!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Shuttles", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles D. Shuttles
USSF Grassroots Soccer Referee

Chairman Smith (MoCo), Vice chairman Waldstreicher (Moco), and distinguished members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, good afternoon. I am grateful for the opportunity to introduce SB-28:

[Ladies and] gentlemen of the committee, sports officials all over this nation are under attack – physically, verbally, and psychologically. The type of vitriolic and invective variance that only belongs in drunken taverns and fight clubs. I'm not being hyperbolic when I say to you that the profession is in a state of emergency. SB-28 is explicitly designed to not only lend the necessary and critical protections to those who preside over sporting events in our State, but it also serves to put any interested spectator, parent, coach or nomadic observer on notice that this behavior is intolerable, nor fitting of the preeminent and storied athletic scholarship that our State enjoys. More Division I NCAA athletes are recruited out of Maryland than any other state in our Union for basketball; it is top 7 for baseball, top 4 for football, and number 1 for soccer (**APPENDIX A**). In a state that is talent rich, pressures to succeed and contracts to fulfill, generates behavior and action that is abhorrent, which is often taken out on sports officials.

SB-28 simply attaches officials, umpires, referees, or judges who are officiating a sporting event and its immediate conclusion, to the criminal law article 3-203 that addresses

2nd degree assault generally, subsection (c) for the purposes of identifying it in in Criminal Procedure 2-203 - 2-205 under the warrantless arrest provision. Unfortunately, this is a necessity born out of a legal realism. A theory for those of us who ascribed to the Sociological School of Jurisprudence (law as a tool for promoting justice in society). Senators, as you consider the needfulness of this bill, I offer you this for your deliberation. I want to draw your attention to CR article 3-708. It is the provision of law that makes threatening or assaulting a state or local elected official a crime (3 yrs 2500); also the aforementioned 3-203, the article that makes it a specific intent crime to assault a police officer, EMT/firefighter, or probation/parole officer in the performance of their duties.

Do these laws proposition that you or they are any better or perhaps more important than those who are not performing those duties? Of course not. What it does is recognize that because of the mere nature of their and your jobs, and because you will inherently be opposed, sometimes violently and impassioned, simply because they disagree with your decisions, additional remedies in the law were necessary. Ladies and gentlemen I submit to you that Sports' officials all over this country experience this exact same fury.

Affording officers the ability to make an immediate arrest for an incident occurring out of his/her presence, provided that there is sufficient probable cause to do so,

remedies a unique problem that officials face, in which 3-203 alone cannot address. Earlier in my testimony I stated that Maryland area is unique for its recruiting of Division I athletes. Because of this honored distinction, sporting events in our State draw an extraordinary number of travelling teams and their fans from out of state. In these cases in the aftermath of an assault, once the suspect is gone, they've likely committed assault with impunity.

In many cases, the suspect cannot be identified because officials do not have the power to seize someone's person. Or, if an officer observes the perpetrator blocks away after the assault, he or she cannot make an arrest, so the perpetrator is free to attend another game and assault another referee. Having included the second-degree assault of a sporting official to CP 2-203 is a reasonable and judicious solution to the problem.

Ladies and gentlemen of the committee, if referees were not in fear for their lives and general safety every day, they nor I wouldn't be here. It is because collectively we all are, we look to our elected officials to help provide resolution. Threatening, intimidating, and assaulting a referee is NOT "a part of the game"; nor is it heckling, nor is it customary. It's fleeting sportsmanship and it is a crime.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable vote for SB-28.

Thank you,

Appendix A

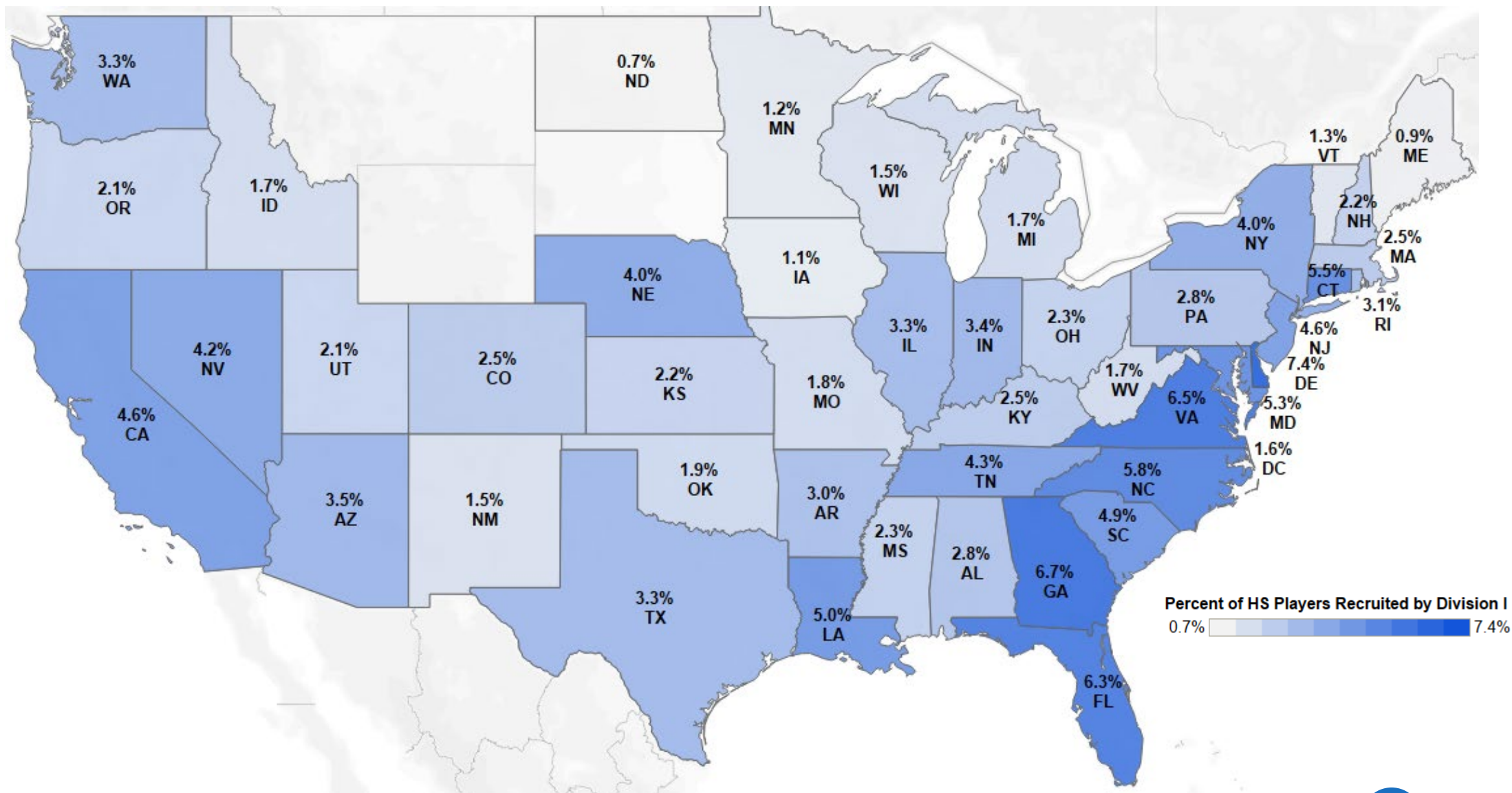
https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/research/pro_beyond/2020RES_HSParticipationMapByState.pdf

Where Do NCAA Division I High School Recruits Come From?

- [Baseball](#)
- [Men's Basketball](#)
- [Football](#)
- [Men's Soccer](#)
- [Wrestling](#)
- [Women's Basketball](#)
- [Softball](#)
- [Women's Soccer](#)
- [Women's Volleyball](#)

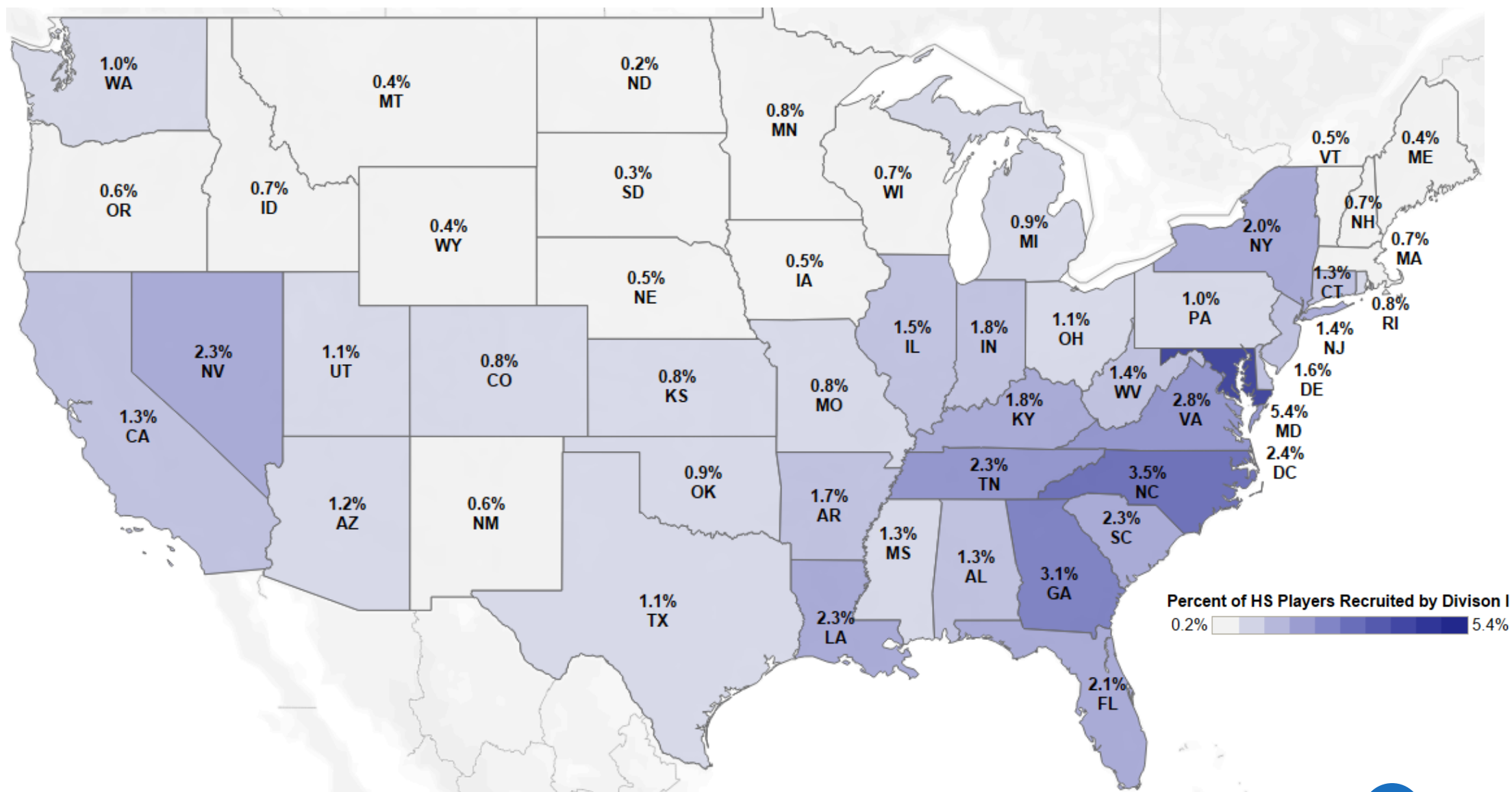


Percentage of High School Boys Baseball Players Recruited by a Division I School



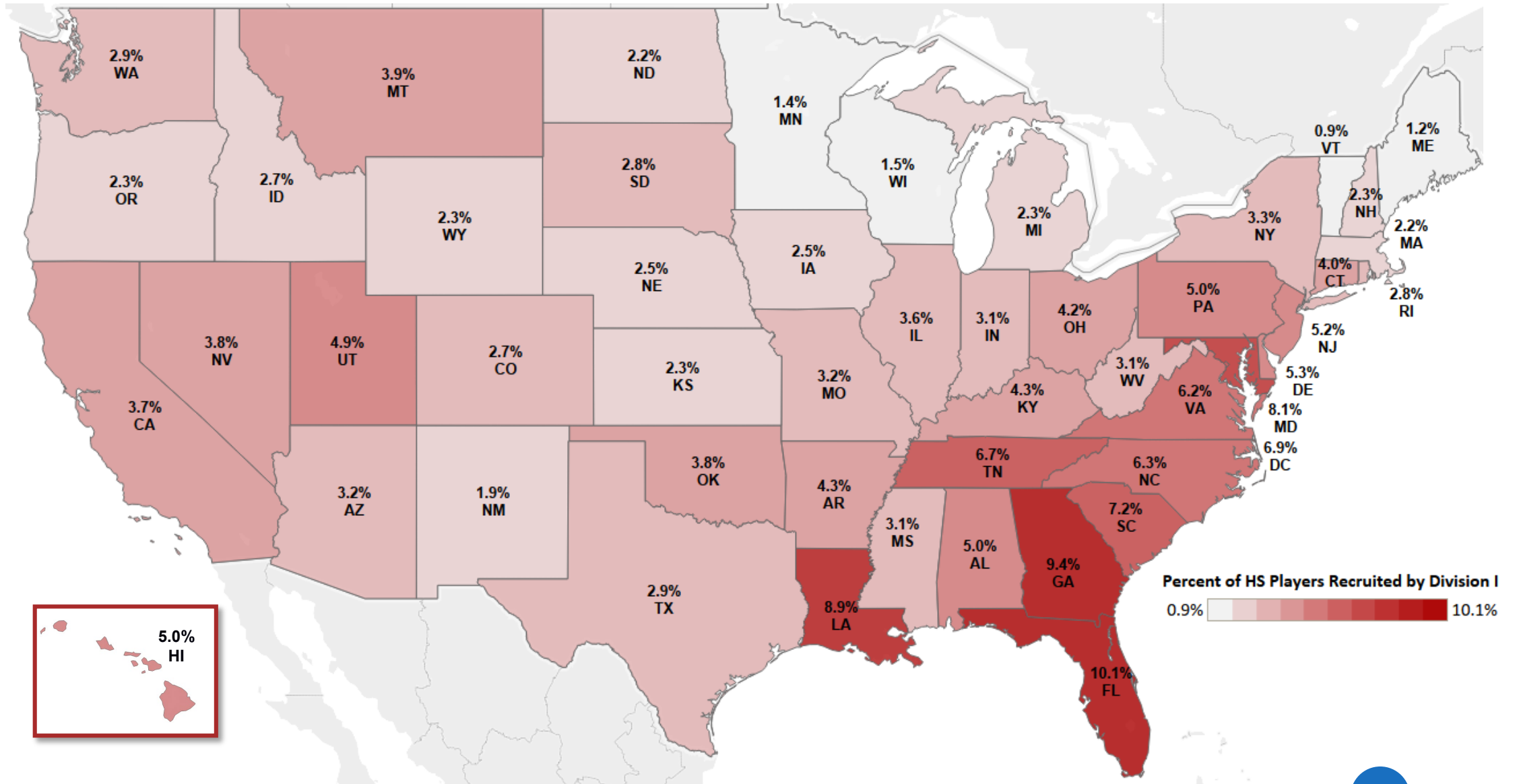
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI MBA recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of boys baseball participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (1.0%) not pictured. No high school data are available for MT, SD or WY.

Percentage of High School Boys Basketball Players Recruited by a Division I School



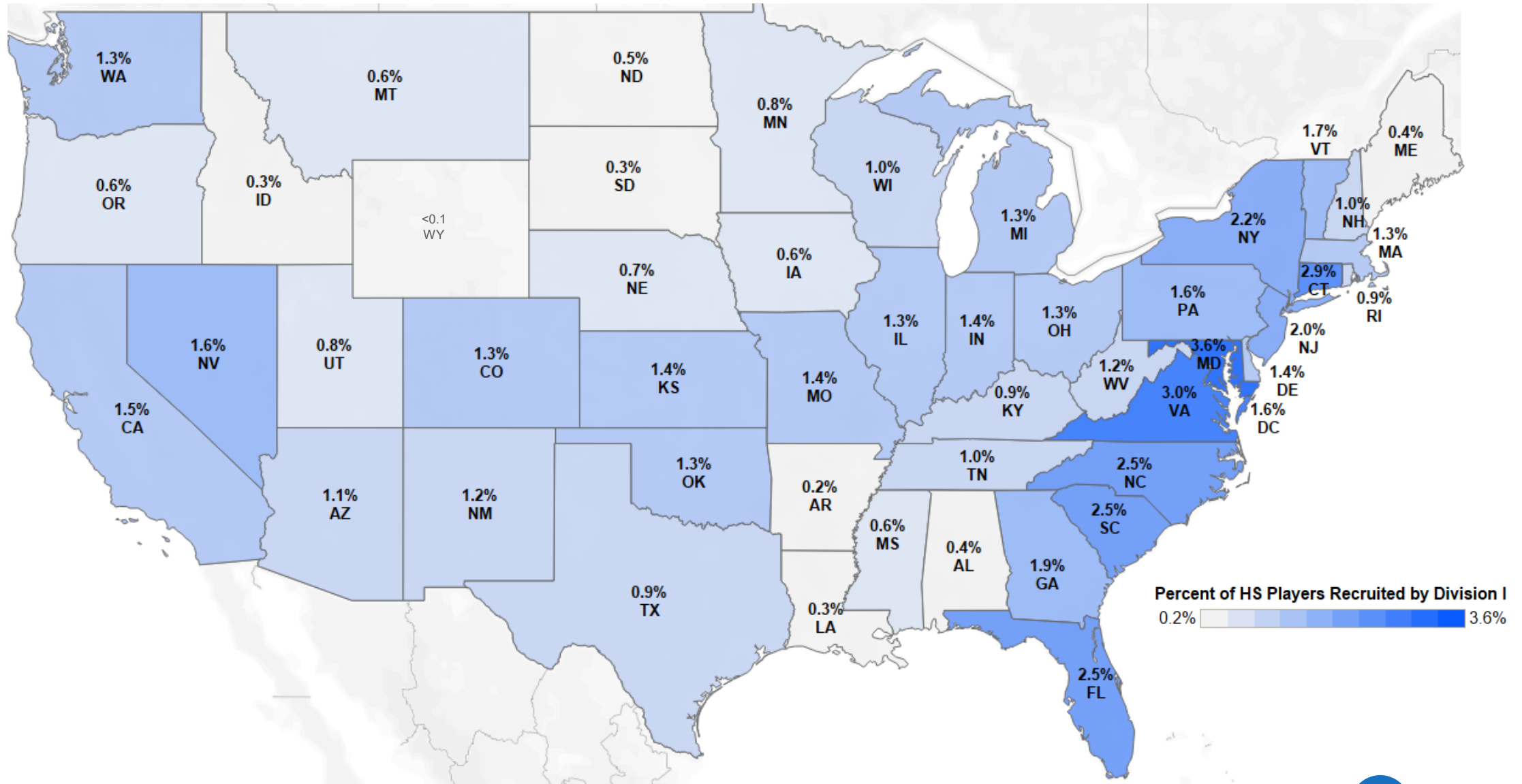
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI MBB recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of boys basketball participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.5%) and HI (0.5%) not pictured.

Percentage of High School Boys Football Players Recruited by a Division I School



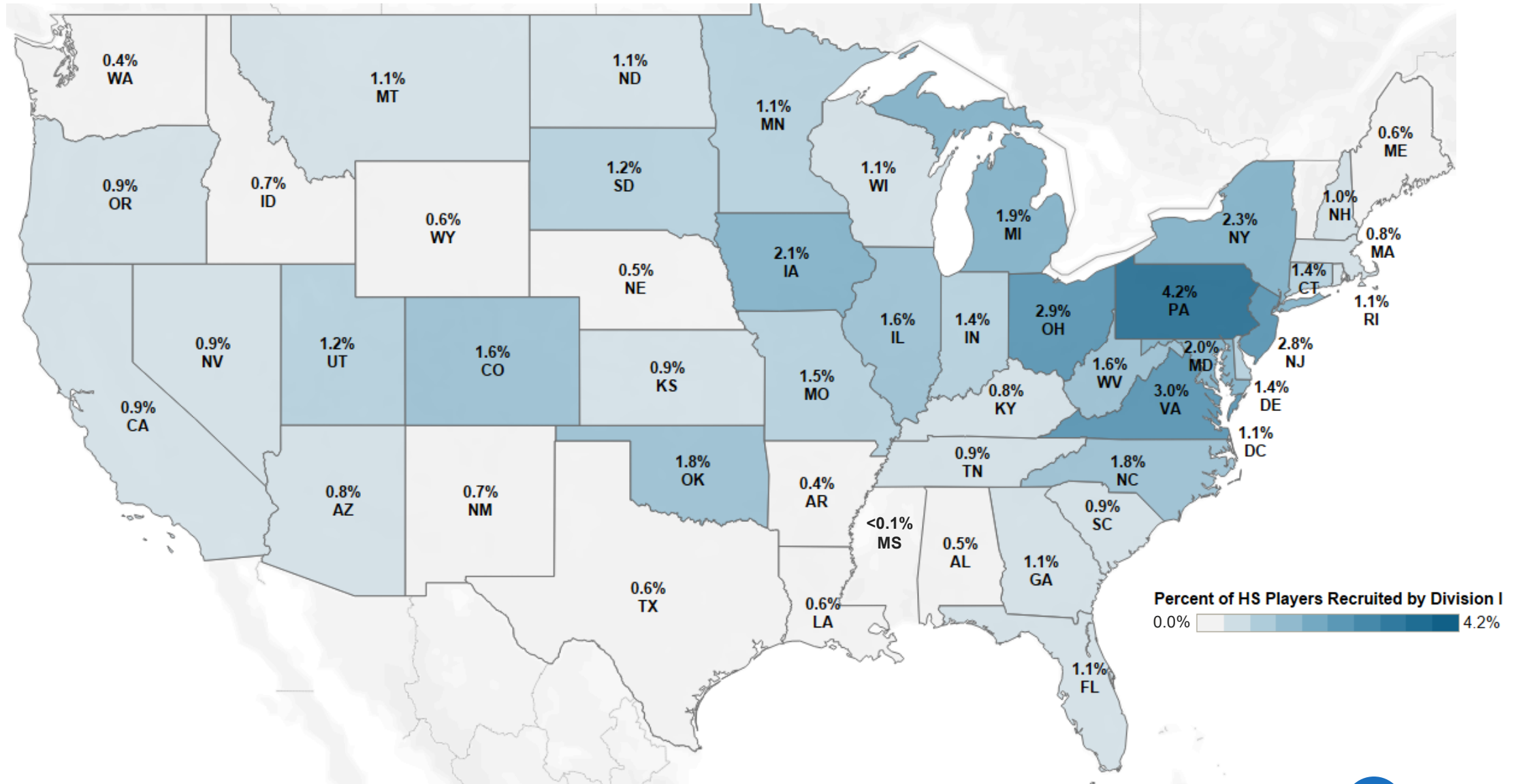
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI MFB recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of boys football participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.6%) not pictured.

Percentage of High School Boys Soccer Players Recruited by a Division I School



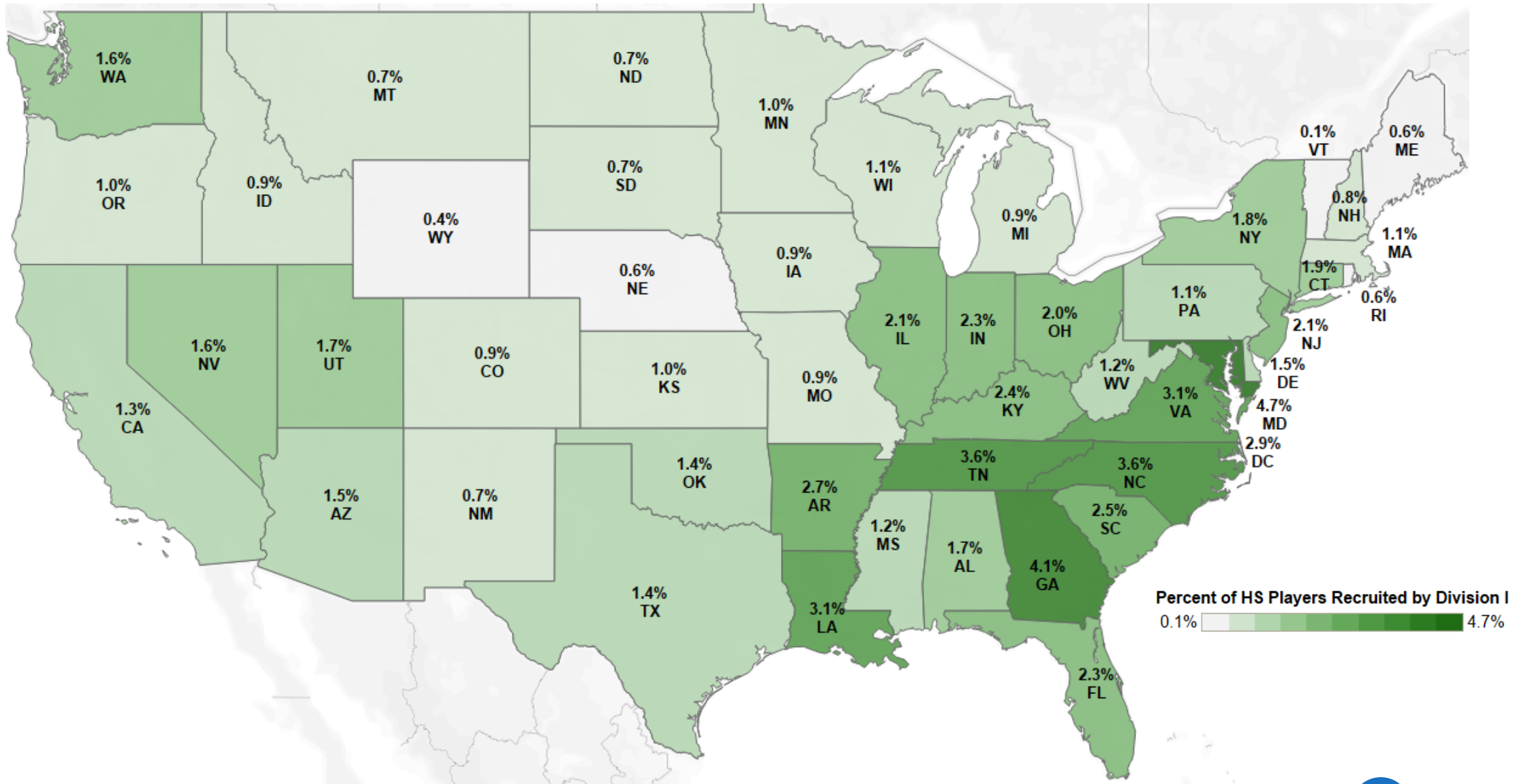
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI MSO recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of boys soccer participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.5%) and HI (1.4%) not pictured. WY had no DI recruits during that time.

Percentage of High School Boys Wrestlers Recruited by a Division I School



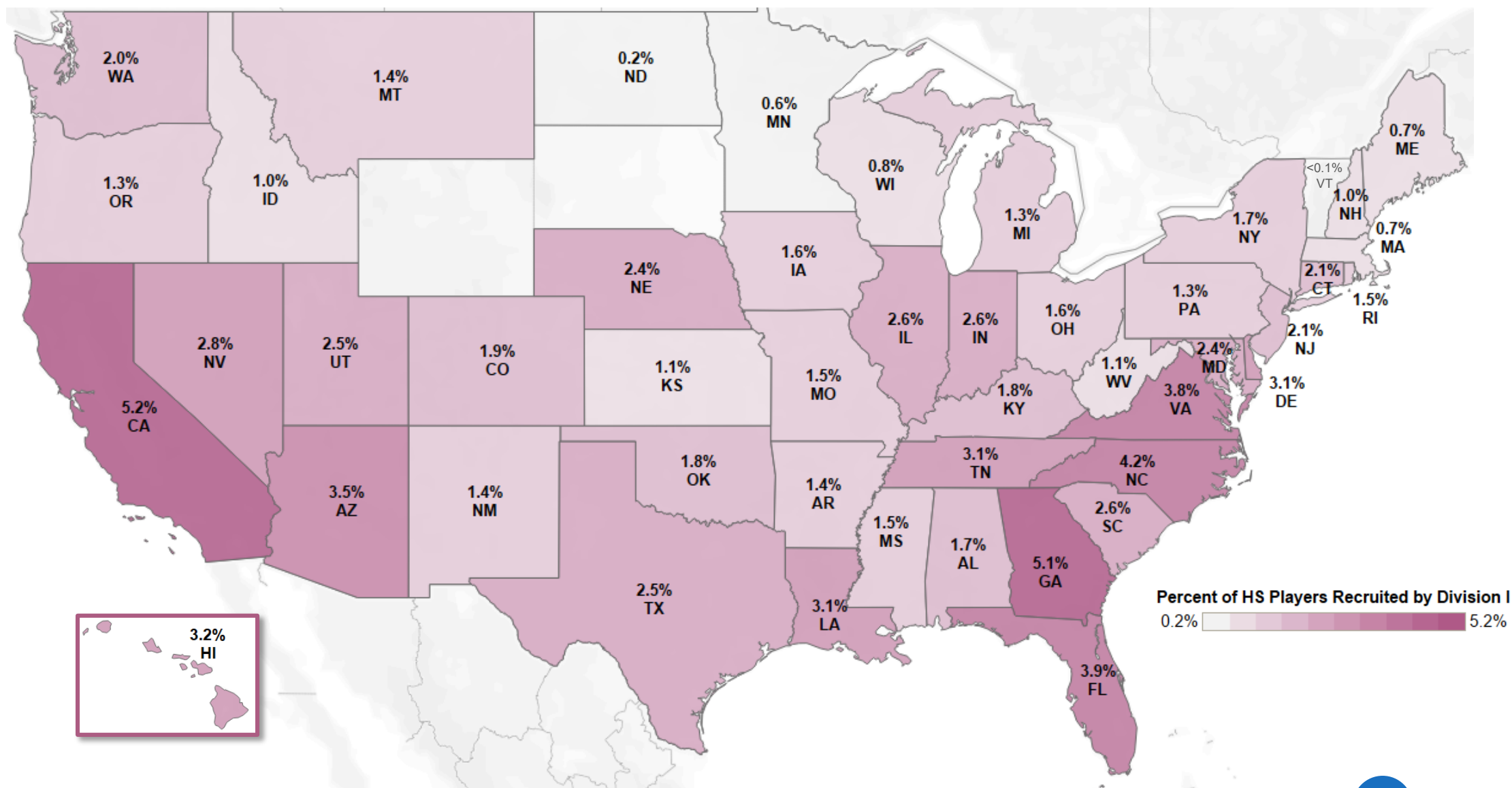
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI MWR recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of boys wrestling participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.8%) and HI (0.4%) not pictured. VT not included (number of HS participants <120).

Percentage of High School Girls Basketball Players Recruited by a Division I School



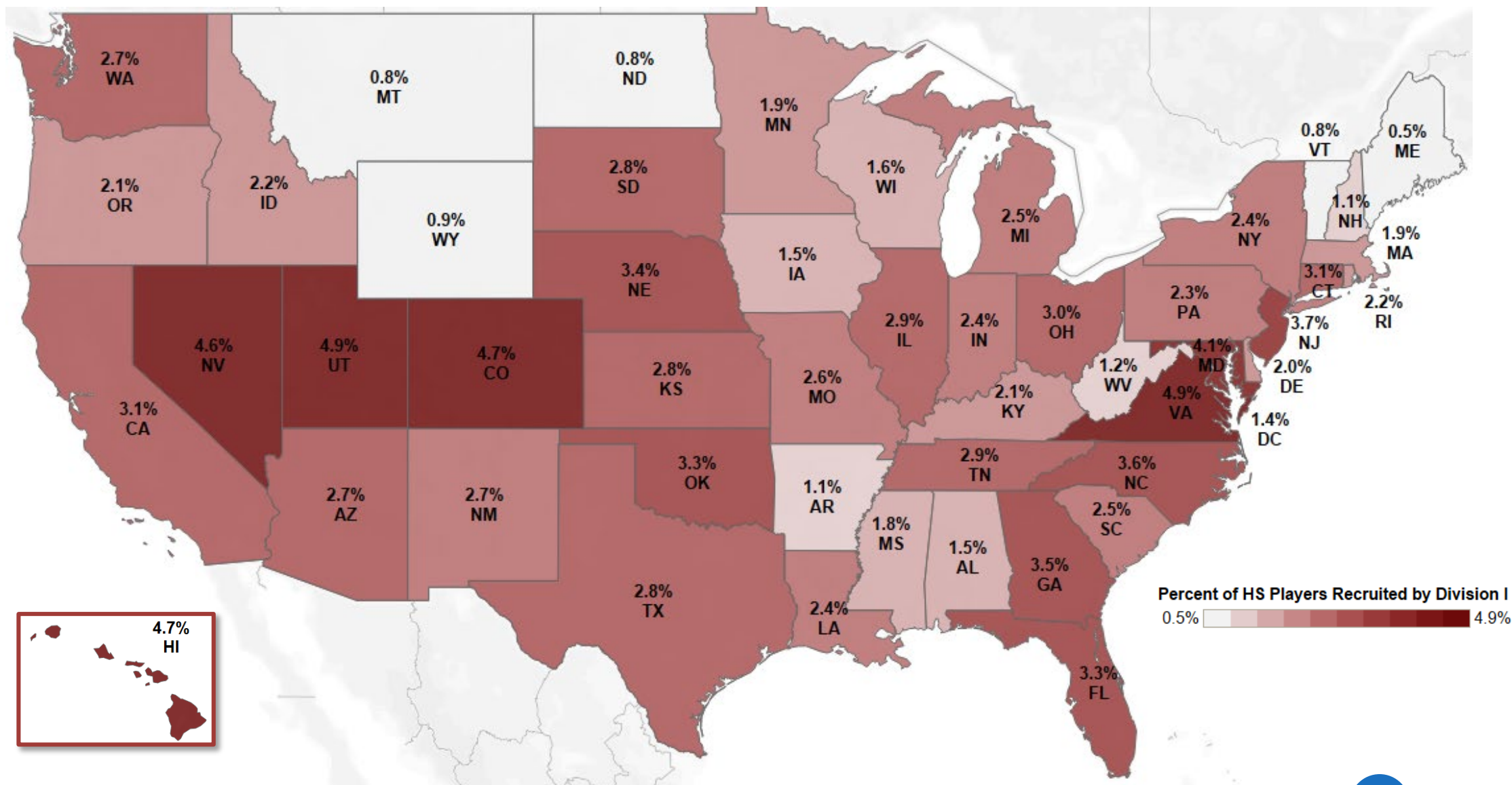
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI WBB recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of girls basketball participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.5%) and HI (1.6%) not pictured.

Percentage of High School Girls Softball Players Recruited by a Division I School



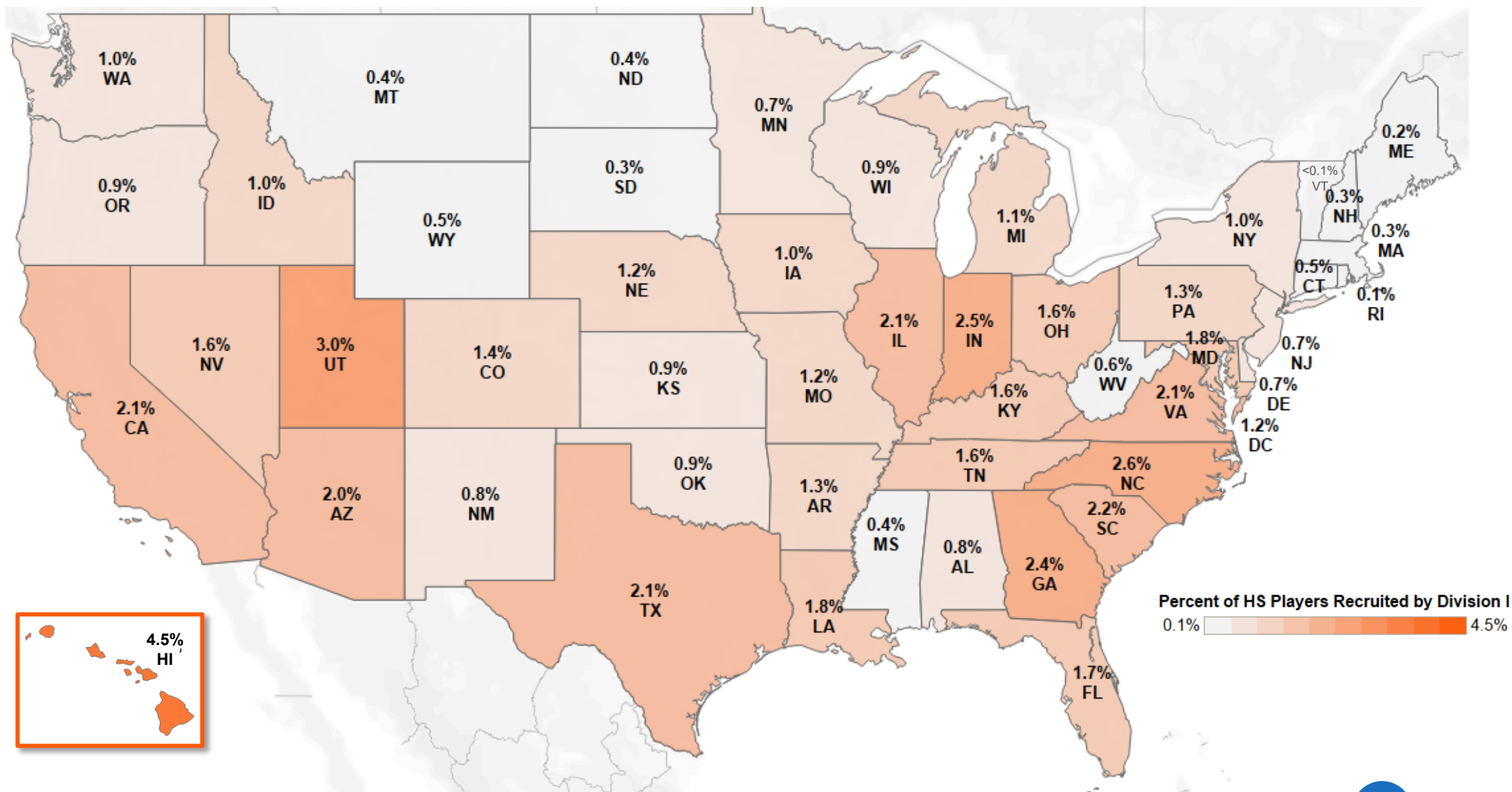
Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI WSB recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of girls softball participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.8%) not pictured. No high school data are available for SD or WY. DC not included (number of HS participants <500). VT had no DI recruits during that time.

Percentage of High School Girls Soccer Players Recruited by a Division I School



Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI WSO recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of girls soccer participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (1.5%) not pictured.

Percentage of High School Girls Volleyball Players Recruited by a Division I School



Notes: Percent derived from the number of DI WVB recruits from 2015-2018 divided by the number of girls volleyball participants per state in 2018-19 as reported by the National Federation of State High School Associations. AK (0.2%) not pictured. VT had no DI recruits during that time.

SB0028
Favorable
jbyrd0062@comcast.net

James Byrd
January 9, 2021
410-2945257
Jbyrd0062@comcast.net

Clate Jackson
cjackson@senate.state.md.us
(410) 841-3092
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street #201
Annapolis, Maryland, 21401

Reference: Bill # SB-0028

Mr. Patterson, I am 100% in favor of this bill. I have been a football official (Maryland Board of Football Officials) and a baseball umpire (Mason Dixon Approved Umpires Association) for 27 years. During my time as an official I have been physically assaulted, harassed, verbally abused, and followed by disgruntled parents, fans, coaches, and players. Early in my football career, after one high school game as I was walking off the field I was hit in the head with a helmet by a player. After several games I have been followed to my car while being verbally harassed.

In most cases we must prepare for as well as remove our gear for our games at our vehicles which leaves us vulnerable to such incidents. During my time as a sports official, I have served in various roles. My current role in both organizations is training and recruiting new officials. Because of the various positions I have held I am made aware of incidents where officials have such issues. There have been times that officials are forced to leave the game location with their field gear on and then stop at a location nearby to change into more comfortable clothing. I personally know of several situations in which officials were assaulted. One ended with an official in shock trauma after a youth football game. You do not have to go far to see these types of incidents via social media and the internet. Most recently the football official that was thrown to the ground by a player. This was not the first such incident by this player. During a playoff game a parent assaulted the PA Announcer because the announcer pronounced her son's name wrong. This same parent during a game earlier in the season that I was involved in verbally harassed my and my partner throughout the game and then proceeded to follow us to our vehicles and then again verbally harassed us as we were switching from our field uniforms to our regular clothes. Fortunately, up until 2011 I was a law enforcement officer so I well versed in handling these types of situations and when followed to my car they see that I am involved in law enforcement and will "cool" their jets. Most officials are not as lucky.

There is a nationwide shortage of sports officials at every level and very difficult to retain new young officials. The reason is they do not want to deal with these type issues. Most officials at the amateur level do not do this for the money but because they love the sport and want to stay involved in the sport and help these athletes continue to enjoy the sports that they also love. Additionally, most officials are coming from a full-time job along with dealing with the same life issues as everyone else. Thus, an individual does not want to do a game, which for some is a form of relaxation/mental therapy.

I am a former police officer I know that an on-scene arrest cannot be made for a misdemeanor crime not committed in the presence of the officer. I do think this needs to change. People need to know that this type of behavior is unacceptable and sets a bad example for the kids.

It is my hope that this bill passes so that sports officials, young and old can be comfortable knowing that if they are assaulted there will be justice.

Respectfully,

James Byrd

Maryland Senate Bill #0028 - Favorable

Testimonial

I have refereed men's lacrosse in the Baltimore-Metro Area since 2007. I currently referee youth, high school, and NCAA lacrosse. I have had fans/parents follow me to my car after a game at all three levels:

- A man followed my partner and I from the stadium and then proceeded to stare me down from about 20 feet away while I took my referee shirt off after finishing up a game at C.M. Wright HS in 2015.
- After the final whistle, a dad rushed across the field demanding my name and then followed me to my car, took a picture of my license plate "so the police could find my identity" for him, and would not leave me alone until I drove off because he was so displeased with my performance in a summer youth tournament game at LaxSplash in 2017.
- In 2019 at Mount St. Mary's University for the NEC Semifinals, a father of a player from Sacred Heart University followed myself and the two other game officials to our cars, even though we had a police escort from the athletic facility, proclaiming how bad we were.

No harm to my person came from any of these incidents, but the incident where the man took a picture of my license plate and refused to get away from my personal space was very unnerving. No one should have to endure that kind of treatment, especially for a kids' game. SB-0028 is common-sense legislation that will protect officials from all sports.

Matt Radebaugh
410-353-3289



January 9, 2021

RE: Senate Bill 0028

To whom it may concern,

The Maryland Board of Football Officials (MBFO) supports Senate Bill 0028 in its entirety.

The MBFO was founded in 1923 and provides High School Football Officiating Services for Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association High Schools.

SB0028
Norm Goodman
Favorable
Normgoodman10@yahoo.com

Senator Patterson,

Good morning from the nation's capital! I say that, as I type this email from the basement of the Senate building, as I'm presently here serving with the MD Army National Guard.

I write you today to request your assistance in getting Senate Bill 0028 passed, to help to protect sports officials across MD by making an assault on a sports official a felony, and allowing for the police to make arrests of such individuals possible, without having to have directly witnessed the assault.

As I'm sure you're aware, assault on a sports official have risen tremendously over the years. We need this bill passed to help protect us.

I presently officiate 6 sports through the high school level, as well as college baseball. And while I have never been a victim of this type, I certainly know several who have.

Youth, high school and collegiate sports provide physical activity, mental acuity, help to develop teamwork, trust, and integrity. Lifelong friendships are forged in arenas and on practice fields every day across the nation, and around the world.

Sports provide fun, and a mental release from daily stressors such as illness, disease, or depression. They need to be protected, and without officials to oversee the games or matches, many young people will suffer.

I would love to introduce myself some time over the coming days, if you would be so amenable. I'd like to fist or elbow bump (in lieu of a handshake, in COVID times) , and ask for your support getting this extremely important legislation passed. You'll find my number enclosed at the bottom, should you wish to arrange a quick meeting. Thanks for your consideration.

Best regards,
Norm Goodman
512 623 0850

Washington Suburban Football Officials Association
Association Formed in 1942

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

James (Jimmy) Chick Commissioner
Robert (Bobby) Johnson
Ro Johnson
Mark Ketchel
Rodney Smith

Hi,

My name is Rodney Smith. I am an Army Veteran, Pastor, proud husband and father. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today on a short notice.

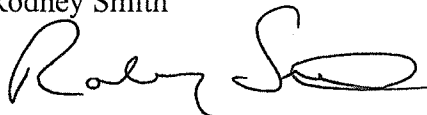
I reached out to my Twin Brother Randy Smith, who have served Southern Maryland County as a firefighter for well over thirty plus years whom I am so proud of. He knows a lot you personally. If I can borrow your ears for a few minutes. I have a burden that will not lift until I see some changes. I have waited for a while looking at other state laws on assault of sport officials, and I feel that now is the right time to move on this important concern to raise the bar before something happens and it becomes breaking news like other states.

I have been a game official for over 35 years (Basketball/baseball/softball/football) and I have seen the rise in game incidents and there is nothing I see on the books for protecting our game officials whether they are volunteers or paid officials like seen in the 18 states. I see the conduct is the same and getting worse every year. I personally have been threatened, hit by players, parents and coaches. My fellow team members have been through the same treatment. Most of the leagues do nothing to assist us, we as officials become the bad guy if we eject or call the local authorities. We usually if needed call the police and nothing happen because there was no injury. We then must go the local police department and meet with the magistrate and file a report. I have yet to be called to court, so it is a waste of time. So next week that player, parent or coach have more wind in their sails to return, why because nothing happened-it is treated like a minor isolated incident.

We still must walk to our vehicles. One never knows who may be waiting with a gun or knife or if you will run into a disgruntled parent or coach at a Walmart or 7-11. After a tough game and having to leave the field alone gets the heart pumping, because we have no support. We do not have special parking or get escorted to our vehicles.

I am asking for eyes to become open and not wait until someone get brave enough to bring a gun or knife or run us off the road. I keep smelling smoke. Where there is smoke, soon there will be fire. Lets do the right thing before someone get a knock on the door notifying a love one of a serious injury or death. Thank you for your time

Rodney Smith



Washington Suburban Football Officials Association
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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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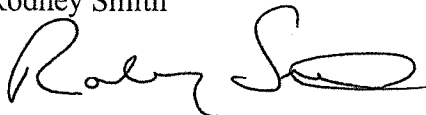
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Rodney Smith



Q&A

1. What types of games you all are referring? YOUTH CLUB FOOTBALL
2. The age groups of the kids who are playing? AGES 6 THRU 14 ON August 1ST
3. When and where the games are played? PRINCE GEORGE/CHARLES/CALVERT AND ST. MARY'S COUNTIES
4. To what lengths you all have to go to defused incidents? WE CAN PENALTLIZE THEM-THE MOST EXTREME WOULD BE EJECTING PARENTS/PLAYERS AND COACHES FROM THE GAME.
5. And if you have had to call law enforcement, have you had to contact league officials? YES WE ENCOURAGE THE REFEREES TO SEND IN COMPLAINT LETTERS ECPECIALLY IF SOMEONE IS EJECTED FROM THE FIELD. I NOW ASK BECAUSE OF SOMANY INCIDENT THAT I GET INCIDENT REPORTS, NOW THEY ARE ALMOST WEEKLY.
6. If so what or any help or relief from them or fines or have any sanction, been levied. None. AT MOST THE COACHES/PLAYERS MAY GET A GAME SUSPENSION
7. What county do you have knowledge of any county or state that have laws on the books that help protect you all if law enforcement has to be call? If so that information is needed? RIGHT NOW THE STATE OF MARYLAND HAVE NOTHING ON THE BOOKS TO SUPPORT GAME OFFICIALS. IT IS TREATED AS A SIMPLE ASSULT AND WE HAVE TO GO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND FILE NAY CHARGES, MOST OF THE TIME NOTHING HAPPENS. WE GET THREATEN ALL THE TIME AND WE DON'T FEEL SUPPORTED TO THE POINT THAT THE LEAGUE WILL SUPPORT US.

the law and its code or number. I need it as soon as possible and if your league has a formal letter head or president that would be helpful to have it in draft form with his signature, and contact information. If if i didn't put it up front it will be help to name the county, city towns park locations dates the incidents have aaccrued reference accrued.

Topic:

ASSAULT; CRIME; SENTENCING; LIABILITY (LAW); RECREATION (GENERAL); SPORTS;

Location:

CRIME AND CRIMINALS ; SPORTS;



December 11, 2006

2006-R-0747

LAWS ON ASSAULT OF A SPORTS OFFICIAL

By: Christopher Reinhart, Senior Attorney

You asked how many other states have specific crimes regarding assault of a sports official.

SUMMARY

We found 18 states with criminal laws regarding assault of a sports official. These states are: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, and West Virginia.


These laws provide specific penalties either by creating a new crime or raising the penalty for one or more existing crimes when they are committed against a sports official. The laws vary in terms of what officials are covered and what levels of sports activities are covered. Some of these laws also cover coaches and other participants but we have not included that information in this report.

In addition to these criminal provisions, two states have civil statutes. Minnesota authorizes the Minnesota State High School League or a school board to ban someone from attending interscholastic activity for up to 12 months for assaulting a sports official. Oregon has a provision for liquidated damages of \$500 to \$1,000, in addition to any other damages, in civil cases for injuries suffered by a sports official.

CRIMINAL LAWS ON ASSAULT OF A SPORTS OFFICIAL

Table 1 summarizes the laws in each state by providing information on the criminal conduct required, penalties, covered officials, and covered events.

Table 1: State Laws Concerning Attacks on Sports Officials

State	Crime	Penalty	Covered Officials	Covered Events
Alabama Ala. Code § 13A-11-144	Commit one of the following crimes against a sports official performing official duties, because of performing those duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment • Menacing • 1st, 2nd, or 3rd degree assault 	Harassment: Class B misdemeanor—up to six months in prison, up to \$3,000 fine, or both Menacing: Class A misdemeanor—up to one year in prison, up to \$6,000 fine, or both Assault 1 st degree: Class A felony—10 years to life in prison, up to \$60,000 fine, or both Assault 2 nd degree: Class B felony—two to 20 years in prison, up to \$30,000 fine, or both Assault 3 rd degree: Class C felony—one to ten years in prison, up to \$15,000 fine, or both	Anyone who enforces the rules of the event, such as an umpire or referee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interscholastic or intramural events, primary school through college • Organized events sponsored by community, business, or nonprofit organizations • Professional or semi-professional events • Any organized athletic activity
Arkansas Ark. Code § 5-13-209	Striking or otherwise physically abusing an official during or immediately before or after an event in which the official participates	Class A misdemeanor: up to one year in prison, up to \$1,000, or both	Athletic contest official	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interscholastic • Intercollegiate • Other organized amateur or professional event
California Cal. Penal Code § 243.8	Battery against official during or immediately before or after an event in which the official participates and the actor knows or reasonably should know the official is performing his duties	Up to one year in jail, up to \$2,000 fine, or both	Referee, linesman, umpire, or similar official registered by or a member of an organization that educates and trains sports officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interscholastic • Intercollegiate • Other organized amateur or professional event
 Delaware Del. Code Ann. § 11-614	Commit 2 nd degree reckless endangering, 3 rd degree assault, terroristic threatening, or criminal mischief against a sports official acting during or immediately before or after the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,000 to \$2,350 fine • Prohibited from participating and attending organized sporting events for three to 12 months • 1st offense: Class A misdemeanor—up to one year in prison 	A registered, paid, or volunteer referee, umpire, line judge, or person acting in a similar capacity at a sporting event	Not defined

• 2nd or subsequent offense:
Class G felony—up to two years
in prison

Table 1: -Continued-

State	Crime	Penalty	Covered Officials	Covered Events
Florida Fl. Stat. § 784.081	Assault or battery against a sports official actively participating in an athletic contest or immediately after and the actor knows or has reason to know the victim's identity, position, or employment	When the underlying crime is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggravated battery: 1st degree felony—up to 30 years in prison, up to \$10,000 fine, or both • Aggravated assault: 2nd degree felony—up to 15 years in prison, up to \$10,000 fine, or both • Battery: 3rd degree felony—up to five years in prison, up to \$5,000 fine, or both • Assault: 1st degree misdemeanor—up to one year in prison, up to \$1,000 fine, or both 	Referee, umpire, linesman, or similar official known by another title, registered or a member of a local, state, regional, or national organization that educates and trains sports officials	Athletic contest
Georgia Ga. Code § 16-5-23	Simple battery against sports official during event or while official is on or leaving property where he officiates	High or aggravated misdemeanor: up to one year in prison, up to \$5,000 fine, or both	Anyone who officiates, including umpire or referee	Amateur events at elementary, secondary, intercollegiate, or recreational level
Illinois 720 ILCS 5/12-2	Assault, at an athletic facility, indoor or outdoor playing field, or within their immediate vicinity, when the official was an active participant in the athletic contest, and the actor knows the person is a sports official	Aggravated assault: class A misdemeanor—up to one year in prison, at least \$1,000 fine. 2 nd or subsequent—up to one year in prison, at least \$2,000 fine.	Person at an athletic contest who enforces the rules, such as an umpire or referee	Any level of competition
Kentucky KRS § 518.090	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally causing physical injury to sports official while the official is (1) performing his duties or (2) arriving or leaving the athletic facility • Assembling five or more people to assault a sports official 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st offense: Class A misdemeanor—up to one year in prison, up to \$500 fine, or both Subsequent offense: Class D felony—one to five years in prison, \$1,000 to \$10,000 fine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class D felony 	Referee, linesman, umpire, or similar person know by a different title, registered or a member of a national, state, regional, or local organization that educates and trains sports officials	Not specified

Table 1:-Continued-

<i>State</i>	<i>Crime</i>	<i>Penalty</i>	<i>Covered Officials</i>	<i>Covered Events</i>
Louisiana LRS § 14:34.4	Battery of school or recreation athletic contest official actively engaged in officiating when the actor has reasonable grounds to believe the person is an official	15 days to 6 months in prison and up to \$500 fine or probation with two days in jail and five days of community service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referee, umpire coach, instructor, administrator, staff person, or school or school board employee of any public or private elementary or secondary school Referee, umpire, coach, instructor, administrator, staff person, or recreation employee of a public or quasi-public recreational program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-sanctioned interscholastic event Sanctioned recreation program event
Montana MCA § 45-2-211	Assault on a sports official	Up to six months in prison, up to \$1,000 fine, or both	Not defined	Any sport at any level of amateur or professional competition
Nevada NRS § 200.471	Assault or battery, based on the performance of the official's duties at a sporting event when the actor knew or should have known the person was an official	<p>Assault: Gross misdemeanor—up to one year in prison, up to \$2,000 fine, or both</p> <p>Assault with deadly weapon or ability to use one: B felony—one to six years in prison, up to \$5,000 fine, or both</p> <p>Battery: B felony (two to 10 years in prison, up to \$10,000 fine, or both) or gross misdemeanor, with different penalties if committed with a deadly weapon depending on the type of harm</p> <p>Different penalties apply when the actor is a probationer, prisoner, or parolee</p>	Paid or unpaid referee, umpire, linesman, timekeeper, inspector, judge, or similar official	Contest, game, or other event involving athletic or physical skill of amateur or professional athletes
New Jersey NJSA § 2C:44-1 (a)(8)	Offense against sports official during or immediately following his duties or because of his status as a sports official	Must be considered an aggravating factor when determining whether to impose sentence of imprisonment	Sports official	Not specified

Table 1: -Continued-

State	Crime	Penalty	Covered Officials	Covered Events
New Mexico NMSA § 30-3-9.1	While official is working, supervising, or administering an event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault • Aggravated assault (using a deadly weapon) • Battery • Aggravated battery 	Assault: misdemeanor—up to one year in prison, up to \$1,000 fine, or both Aggravated assault: 3 rd degree felony—three years in prison, up to \$5,000 fine, or both (higher amounts if caused death) Battery: misdemeanor Aggravated battery, depending on the harm or use of a deadly weapon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd degree felony • 4th degree felony: 18 months in prison, up to \$5,000 fine, or both 	Referee, linesman, umpire, timer, scorer, or similar official registered as a member of an organization that educates and trains sports officials	Not specified
North Carolina N.C. Stat. § 14-33 (b)(9)	Assault, assault and battery, or affray against a sports official during an event while discharging his duties or immediately after the event	Class 1 misdemeanor—up to 45 days in prison, fine in court's discretion, or both (sentencing guidelines apply and can change penalties)	Anyone who enforces the rules of the event, such as an umpire or referee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interscholastic or intramural events, primary school through university • Organized events sponsored by community, business, or nonprofit organizations • Professional or semi-professional events • Any organized athletic activity
Oklahoma OSA § 21-650.1	Assault and battery against a sports official	Misdemeanor – up to one year in jail, up to \$1,000 fine, or both	Referee, umpire, timekeeper, coach, official, or other person having authority in connection with an athletic contest	Any amateur or professional event
Pennsylvania 18 Pa. Stat. § 2712	Commits the crime of assault against a sports official during a sports event or as a result of his official acts	1 st degree misdemeanor: up to five years in prison, up to \$10,000 fine, or both	Person enforcing rules at a covered event, such as an umpire or referee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interscholastic athletic activities from junior high through university • Any other organized athletic activity, including professional or semi-professional events
Texas	Commits the crime of assault against a sports participant		Anyone who participates in an official capacity.	Interscholastic, intercollegiate, or organized amateur or

Penal Code § 22.01		Class B misdemeanor: up to 180 days in prison, up to \$2,000 fine, or both	Includes a referee, umpire, and linesman.	professional athletic competition
West Virginia W. Va. Code § 61-2-15a	Commit the crime of assault or battery against an athletic official while he is acting as an athletic official	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault: misdemeanor—1 to 30 days in prison, \$50 to \$100 fine, or both • Battery: misdemeanor—1 to 30 days in prison, \$100 to \$500 fine, or both 	Person enforcing rules at a sports event, such as an umpire or referee	Not defined

CIVIL STATUTES

Two states have civil statutes. Minnesota authorizes the Minnesota State High School League or a school board to ban someone from attending interscholastic activity for up to 12 months for assaulting a sports official in connection with an interscholastic activity under the league's control, supervision, or regulation. The law applies to an umpire, referee, judge, linesperson, timer, scorekeeper, or similar official (Minn. Stat. § 128C.08).

Oregon has a specific provision for damages in civil cases for injuries suffered by a sports official. The Oregon law provides liquidated damages of \$500 to \$1,000, in addition to any other damages, for a sports official when someone (1) intentionally makes offensive physical contact with him while serving as a sports official or briefly after, (2) the person knew he was an official, and (3) the contact occurred at or near the facility where he officiated. The law applies to a referee, linesman, umpire, judge, or similar official registered by or a member of an organization that educates and trains sports officials. The official can also recover reasonable attorneys' fees (Or. Stat. § 30.882).

CR:ts

Parents attack referees after high school hockey game ends in controversy- USA TODAY High School Sports / February 8, 2016

HOWELL, N.J. – According to a media release issued late Sunday night, the Howell Police Department confirmed that officers responded to Howell Ice World earlier that afternoon in reference to a dispute that occurred between parents and referees officiating a high school hockey game between Manalapan and Howell.

According to the release, which was issued by Howell Police Sergeant Scott Revilak, upon arrival investigating officers “learned that a hockey game took place at this location and a dispute between parents and referees occurred. The dispute started during the game. Following the game, one parent approached two referees regarding the dispute. At this time a physical altercation began and a forth subject became involved in the altercation.”

RELATED: Fight involving players and fans halts girls basketball game in Indiana

RELATED: Middle school basketball brawl in Kentucky leads to coach's resignation

The media release also elaborated on the injuries suffered by those parties involved, though no details on what subjects were afflicted with which injuries were given, stating “The four subjects involved in the physical altercation sustained minor visible injuries (This included red marks and bruising to facial area, bloodshot eyes, bruised hand) and complaints of pain.”

The media release also said that “two of the involved subjects refused medical attention and the other two subjects were transported to Jersey Shore Medical Center.”

Prior to issuing the media release, Howell police said two people went into the referees' locker room after the tied game ended and started to fight two referees.

Referee Dave Brown, the 45-year old president of the New York-New Jersey chapter of the National Ice Hockey Officials Association, confirmed Sunday night that he was one of two referees attacked following the game, but declined to talk further, saying the incident was under investigation.

Brad Gardner, Manalapan's hockey coach, said he came out of a locker room after the game and saw the rink's lobby full of parents and police.

Punched by parent (2010), Duval football coach is fired(Jacksonville Fla.

Having his bell rung during a Jacksonville high school football game shook Chris Green on several levels.

First, understand Green is a coach, not a player.

And his cuts and the blows to his head, police say, were caused by a player from his own Ribault High Trojans and the player's father - who now faces a felony charge.

But what really troubled Green was that getting his face bloodied and his head smacked against a fence pole on a Friday night last month led to him being fired the next Monday.

"I just couldn't believe there was so little support for me and the efforts I've put in there," said Green, 41, who was the team's offensive coordinator.

He said Ribault principal James Young told him he mishandled the way the athlete's father, 39-year-old Jonathan Chandler, approached him at halftime near the locker room during a Sept. 10 game against First Coast High.

"He told me I was just as much to blame as the parent," Green said. "And that was solely based on the fact that I said something back to him."

Green said Chandler often lobbied for his son, Justin, a junior tight end, to get the ball more often, and that he was upset about the first half when he made a profane comment. Green said he answered, "no one is trying to hear that," and that Chandler made a threat and he answered, "look man, you don't scare me."

About then, Green said, both father and son grabbed him and punched him while he swung in self-defense until other football staff pulled them apart.

He said a doctor he saw at an emergency room after developing blurred vision told him he might have had a concussion.

Chandler, who stands 6-foot-4 and weighs 350 pounds, was charged Friday with battery on a school employee, a felony. A police report said three witnesses told police he was the aggressor.

10F2

Smith, Rodney

From: Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 6:35 PM
To: Smith, Rodney
Subject: Fwd: ***Threatening Comments From Dunkirk Head Coach & Parent Using Profanity & Approaching Referee On Bensville Field***

CAUTION: This is an EXTERNAL email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: SHELBINATOR <shelby_seven@comcast.net>
Date: Sun, Sep 22, 2019, 3:43 PM
Subject: ***Threatening Comments From Dunkirk Head Coach & Parent Using Profanity & Approaching Referee On Bensville Field***
To: James Chick <WSFOA@hotmail.com>, Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>
Cc: Anthony Henson <ahenson1018@yahoo.com>, Damian Wills <damiawills@aol.com>

Jimmy/Rodney,

The game in question was an 11 year old contest (as I recall) between the Hawks and the Warriors. Needless to say, the Dunkirk Warriors were losing and their dissatisfaction and rhetoric following each of my calls, or lack thereof, increased by the minute.

Case and point, all of a sudden all the coaches and parents are experts on the new horse-collar penalty. One of Dunkirk's players was wrapped around the shoulders in a sidewise bearhug and was brought down to the ground. I made no call, but the sideline wanted a horse-collar call. During this time a male spectator was yelling profanities at me, which I informed the coach was unacceptable, everyone needed to calm down, "slow their roll" and the head coach needed to handle the situation. That was my warning.

Fast-forward to the 4th quarter and a Dunkirk player was running with the ball while two (2) Hawks defenders dived onto him up high, twisted him up, and their combined momentum carried all three (3) players out of bounds. The result of the play was a no call for horse-collar and it left the Dunkirk player injured. (Football is a contact sport.) I called an injury timeout and concurrently heard the sideline erupting regarding the no call. Meanwhile, the male spectator leaped over the fence while yelling profanities at me and began to approach me on the field in a threatening manner. I warned the spectator not to step onto the field and he continued to yell at me, while telling me that he can come onto the field if he wants. I threw the flag and told the coaches to get him off the sideline immediately. The head coach attempted to waterdown the episode by stating that the male spectator was the parent of the injured player. I informed the head coach that he was threatening me and had no business approaching the field where I was standing. (Note: The injured player was on the sideline already and the male spectator/parent made NO move in the direction of his son, the injured player, after jumping the fence. Instead, the male spectator continued striding in my direction, coming specifically for me.) Once I threw the flag and told the Head Coach to get the male spectator off the sideline, and proceeded to get back to the game, is when Rodney came onto the field and asked what was happening. I told him that it was fine, and he continued over to the Dunkirk bench in an effort to allay their concerns and quiet down the rhetoric.

I finished the game and during the hand shaking at mid-field, which I did not participate in, the coaches continued to complain to Damian and Anthony regarding my no calls, while I was still in earshot of their comments. When I failed to react to their provoking tactics, the Dunkirk Head Coach yelled at me, with the other referees, coaches, parents, and yes, players

208 <

still on the field listening to him, that, "I wish that I had ten seconds in an elevator with him, so that I could kick his a**!" I did not respond to the overt threat of violence.

In this new world of "Domestic Terrorism" I am not taking this threat lightly. This Head Coach is no role model and has no business leading a team in a youth organization. He should be banned from coaching! Maybe charges brought up against him? He is essentially teaching and advocating that the Dunkirk players should immediately resort to violence in life, if a situation does not go their way. What a reprehensible take away and example by a Head Coach...

Regards,
Shelby

On Sep 21, 2019, at 3:01 PM, Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com> wrote:

Jimmy

Play and I arrived at the Bensville field at 12:45 at their halftime. somewhere in 4th quarter I notice that there was an injured player then I saw one of coaches on the Dunkirk side very upset about something. He was in Shelby's face yelling and screaming so I decided to walk out on the field to see what was going on.

The head coach was very upset. I tried to talking to him. that he was yelling was we did not call several horse collar plays on the hawks team. Trying to understand what he was upset about again, he would not talk, only yell and scream.

At the end of the game while both teams were shaken hands I observed the head coach still upset Yelling screaming at me wanting my name I told him I was on the field, just trying to help understand what happened. So they wanted to know why was on the field, that I have no business on the field or on his sideline I was trying to say I explained to him that I would just trying to ascertain what was going on and he again being still upset then turned to Shelby and told him just give him 10 minutes in an elevator with him and he would kick his A**. I told the head coach that was unacceptable, unprofessional and I walked off the field I told Shelby that he needs to write it up and turn it in in a statement

On Sep 15, 2019, at 11:15 AM, James Chick <WSFOA@hotmail.com> wrote:

Sat Sept 21 Bensville Anthony and Damian 9:00 7g 1st g 7u
Shelby 10:15 6g

Reply
Jim

Smith, Rodney

From: Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 6:34 PM
To: Smith, Rodney
Subject: Fwd: Sept 28 Ejection

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: James Chick <wsfoa@hotmail.com>
Date: Sun, Sep 29, 2019, 2:37 PM
Subject: Sept 28 Ejection
To: greg disney <gdhdisney@comcast.net>, Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>

Hi,

Report from Lancaster Field #1:

Game #1: Nothing to Report

Game #2: Braves HC disqualified and removed from the sideline due to multiple violations of Rule 9.8.1(a)-(d) by his assistant coaches. The actions and verbal statements by these coaches were deemed to be flagrant by the game official. Not only was the behavior in conflict with the legal requirements for coaches, but was also in conflict with the NFHS Coaches Code of Ethics: The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical. Once that behavior was corrected in the 1st half, we had no more issues with that team, assistant coaches, or fans. They went on to lose, but the assistant coaches were so busy coaching they had very little time to banter with the officials.

Games #3-6: Other than a Raiders' fan being removed for trying to incite fans on the Warriors side of the field, nothing to report.

Games #7: Was suspended by the Raiders 14U coach and team president with 3 minutes to play in the 4th quarter. They were not pleased with their teams or fans behavior and were concerned if the game continued it would encourage unsportsmanlike conduct behavior. Raiders were down by multiple scores on their side of the field with impossible odds of winning. However if they decide at a later date they want to finish these last 3 minutes, please put me on that game so I can get a full game's fee for 3 minutes of work.

Smith, Rodney

From: Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 6:33 PM
To: Smith, Rodney
Subject: Fwd: Incident 9/28 Hollowing Point Park

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Craig Howell <craighowellsr@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 30, 2019, 4:08 PM
Subject: Fwd: Incident 9/28 Hollowing Point Park
To: GDHDisney <gdhdisney@comcast.net>
Cc: Rodney Smith <Pastorrod1957@gmail.com>

Greg,

This email follows up the incident that occurred at the end of the 10-UD1 game (between 3:15-3:30pm) on Saturday, September 28, 2019 at Hollowing Point Park. As you may know, the game was a hard fought battle between two undefeated teams. And at times extremely tense. While we had no way of knowing who win or who would lose ...we DID know that one of the teams had to lose! The Officials missed some calls on both sides (PFE & SMH), but they were minor and did not impact the final outcome of the game. In my opinion, they called an honest and fair game. As the game drew to a close I observed PFE Coach (Willie) walking very fast towards the visiting sideline, (on the side towards the Concession Stand). This is the area where the Officials had set up chairs and coolers for themselves to use during game breaks. PFE Coach Willie then approached an Official (Shelby Butler) that was packing up his gear to leave and asked him a question which I later learned was in reference to calls. The Official's response was " Sir the game is over". But as the PFE Coach Willie started walking back towards the home (PFE) sideline he shouted out some Profanity to the Officials (which he did on three more occasions that afternoon) . A Hawks Parent who knew the PFE Coach, said " it was a good game coach", at which time the coach again pointed at the Official and again shouted out Profanity and called them Cheaters. At this juncture another Hawks Coach (Mike Webber) commented that the Officials called the same for both teams and were fair. The back and forth was starting to escalate so I instructed my Coach (Mike Webber) to drop it. The PFE Coach then headed over to meet his team in the huddle. There is no doubt that the Coach was extremely upset about the loss, but although there was never a point where he threaten any physical harm it was very threatening to approach the Official after the game was over. I did speak with the PFE Commissioner (Mark Denietolis) and he said he would address the Coach.

Craig Howell

Hawks/SMYAC Board Member

Smith, Rodney

From: Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 6:30 PM
To: Smith, Rodney
Subject: Fwd: 10u PFE Coach ejected

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: mark williams <markwill2469@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat, Sep 28, 2019, 7:44 PM
Subject: Fwd: 10u PFE Coach ejected
To: <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: mark williams <markwill2469@yahoo.com>
Date: September 28, 2019 at 5:52:00 PM EDT
To: WSFOA@hotmail.com
Subject: 10u PFE Coach ejected

James,

Coach Josh Dyner was ejected from the 10u PFE vs SMD. At about 4 minutes left in the 4th quarter on the PFE sideline. A PFE player running was hit out of bounds. I throw the penalty flag for unsportsmanlike. As soon as that happen the coach Josh turned and shoved me. I immediately threw a penalty on the coach making contact with a official and ejected him out of the game. At the same time another coach from the same team grabbed the coach that shoved me. After this the president of PFE came to the sideline and tried to say I ran into the coach. I explained to the president that he shoved me. The coach was ejected and removed from the field. If you have any questions please let me know.

Mark Williams
757-602-8043

Sent from my iPhone

But the main issue was the disrespectful coaches on the field and parents on the Pax side 7U. Before a 7U game, I always brief the coaches that will be on the field what the rules are, mainly that they have one minute to get their play off (rule 9.1.2.5) on every play the Pax coaches took over 1 minute, so e times almost 2 minutes break the huddle. We do try not to call delay of game of the 7U games, but some coaches are so far away from the 1 minute time.

Rule 9.1.2.8, is where I had the most issues with the Pax coaches and I explained this to the president today. 1.taking way more than a minute to get their play off. Then after ask the coaches to move back 10 yards on every down, a lot of continued talking to the players, during the time when when the quarterback is calling signals.

I explained that the offense have 60 seconds. When they are ready we call for the coaches to move back. This was a game day issue for these coaches. At halftime. I again took the time to explain the rules to them. They said ok. But the second half was worse. Before the third quarter ended. I eject an assistant coach I was told his name was (Deamold) from the Raiders for saying to me during a extra point when again ask to please move to the end line. He said this is a "Bull Shit", my \$^#*\$& defense is not ready.

Game #2 went well with few issues, but I feel we handled them well. one being we only had two officials because a car being stolen. Jimmy had to make some shifts to get us a third official. there was an apparent out of bounds late hit was not seen because it happened behind the wing official, the coaches bum rushed the wing official. I explained to them, if there is an issue, only one coach need to approach the referee not 3-5 coaches. Both coaches knew we were handicapped until we got help.

Another issue for the coaches on an offensive penalty inside 2 minutes, the clock starts on the ready to play after the penalty is accessed or declined. On a first down inside 2 minutes. The clock stops, to move the chains, then the clock starts again if no timeout have been called by either team. They had an issue with that..

Game #3, the game was a blowout in the 4th quarter. The coaches on both sides had issues with rule 7.2, why? Because they did not read it. At the end of the game i was bought the 2019 SMYAC rules. So I went to 7.2 and showed them..

Jimmy please pass along that we spend to much time doing rule clinics on the field when if we had a mandatory clinic, we can go over the rules and explain them. It would be a big help.

✂ Our referees and coaches need to keep up with the rules to make the game better for all.

I want to thank Mr. Burris for his help today. He knows he have his hands full, but again after doing this for 35 years, it is tough to referee these games, week in and week out and listen to coaches wanting to augur mostly about rule interpretation and rule differences that some fail to read

1. Lining up in the neutral zone. I get ask, how many times do we put them back?
 2. The two minute clock and how penalties apply AND starting and stopping the clock.
 3. The horse collar rule when two or more players are involved. Or what is a horse collar
 4. The blowout rule. Almost every team have their own meaning. I have coaches say, "No I am losing, i can do what i want" or "hey referee, they can't run outside the tackle"
 5. No matter what time of day, teams being in the endzone 5-10 minutes before their starting time. I have instructed referees not to go a d find teams. Only the first game have a grace period Rule 7.6
 6. Having their players checked in before the coin toss. "But ref, i have not checked in my players yet, the game starts at 9am" rule 8.1
 7. The overtime period rules.(I was ask today, what if I intercept the ball, why can't I run it back?)
- Teams practice for an hour before their game, now we have to wait until they find a chain crew before the game starts. (ALL THREE OF MY GAMES TODAY. I HAD TO WAIT AT LEAST 5 MINS FOR A CHAIN CREW 7.11

Smith, Rodney

From: Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 6:28 PM
To: Smith, Rodney
Subject: Fwd: Fw: Write up

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: James Chick <wsfoa@hotmail.com>
Date: Sun, Oct 20, 2019, 4:27 PM
Subject: Fw: Write up
To: greg disney <gdhdisney@comcast.net>, Rodney Smith <pastorrod1957@gmail.com>

Oct 19 L Dent

Jim,

Beginning of the second half early in the 3rd quarter a male parent was yelling about a low block on the line of scrimmage in the free blocking zone. I ignored he. Then at one point during the next play, he stated "if my son gets hurt you'll be sorry." I still ignored him but when he threatened to get us in the parking lot, I stopped the game and went and informed the Referee Robert, what the parent had said to us. We asked for the club commissioner to come to the field. When he didn't appear, we called for the 2 St. Mary's Sherriff officers to come to the field. I informed them that the parent had threatened to meet us in the parking lot and that he had to leave the field because we felt threatened for our safety. The officers went and spoke to the parent. The parent complained to the officers and took his time to exit the field area. We informed both coach's of the situation. As normal the LaPlata coach talking about the parent didn't mean nothing by it. He was told either the parent leaves the field area or we will. After the parent left, we discussed what he was complaining about. Rule 2 sect. 17 states in the free blocking zone players can block below the waist and block in the back as long as both players are on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. We resumed the game without further interruptions.

To Whom It May Concern

I, as a soccer referee for more than 25 years, am decidedly for the proposed bill. The issue of sport officials abuse is very important and serious and is still persistent notwithstanding multiple measures that have been taken so far to eliminate it.

During my 25-year career as a sport official, working for two major Soccer Referee Associations (MWSRA and CASRA), I experienced abuse and harassment on multiple occasions - by players, coaches, and spectators/player's parents.

Abuse may take different forms - either open verbal harassment threats made during or after the game, or more resourceful, in the form of complaints to the league about the referee whose decisions in the course of the game are not appreciated for any reason.

Such complaints often contain distortion and lies, which may result in sanctions against the abused referee. Several years ago, while refereeing a youth soccer game, I sent off the field a parent for abusing language directed towards me, which resulted in a lengthy complaint to the league. That complaint misrepresented not only what was happening on the field but also marred my personality. The referee association, which assigned that game, without any investigation, banned me for the whole year from doing games for that league, and frankly explained the reason - they did not want any friction with the client. This particular incident constitutes, in my opinion double, abuse. That is why I would suggest that the new law require that referees are granted a fair investigation and hearing before any sanctions against them are taken. After every game we file a detailed report on any unusual circumstances, including abuse and harassment. Referee Associations should inform us about the outcome of those reports. At least in my experience, it almost never happens.

This winter, I have already filed two reports of referee abuse and harassment - one from an uncontrolled parent, and the other - from a coach refusing to follow COVID rules.

The problem is not going anywhere, so I strongly support this effort and hope that a new law that better protects us, sport officials, will be eventually passed.

Thank you for your time and attention

Michael Immerman
Grass Root Soccer Referee
8207 Castanea Lane
Derwood MD 20855

Michael Immerman__Favorable__SB0028__michael.immerman@gmail.com

301-980-6352