

SB638/HB836 - SUPPORT

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**Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
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Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

Good afternoon Mr. Chair, Madame Vice Chair and Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee, my name is Martin McNair. I am the father of Jordan McNair and the Founder of The Jordan McNair Foundation. It is a pleasure to join the bill's co-sponsor Senator Shelly Hettleman by providing oral testimony in support of **Senate Bill 638 Elijah Gorham Act**. Since 2018, The Jordan McNair Foundation has been promoting education, awareness and prevention of heat-related illnesses and injuries as well as improving player safety in sports among Coaches, Parents, and Student Athletes.

Bill – SB 638 is necessary because the Centers for Disease Control reports that over 40 million U.S. children participate in organized youth sports and bear a disproportionate burden of sports injuries. Over the past 2-3 years, high school student athletes have been impacted by heat-related illness and injury and cardiac arrest more than any other levels of play.

The Jordan McNair Foundation strongly urges the passing of SB 638 primarily to help improve player safety which is also part of the Foundation's mission. The reigns need to be tightened on

Emergency Action Plans (EAPs), Heat Acclimatization and the trained use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and Cold Water Tubs among all Coaches, Athletic Directors and Trainers.

Many injury and death incidents among high school student athletes had to do with the lack of developing an EAP for each athletic field or venue, failure to review the EAP or too much time lapse between practices of the EAP. The Emergency Action Plan is equivalent to a fire drill. Fire drills occur so that everyone will know what to do in case of a fire. All coaches, athletic directors and trainers need to read, understand and more importantly practice the EAP – so that everyone will know their respective roles to help keep student athletes safe. We highly support the practicing of the Emergency Action Plans in March or April before Spring and Summer practices - which is peak season for incidents and again in August before Fall sports practices and games begin.

The passing of this bill is urgent as we don't need any other student athletes dying while playing sports. We don't need another Jordan McNair or Elijah Gorham who just died in October 2021 after an incident while playing high school football.

On behalf of student athletes across the State of Maryland, we urge a favorable report on SB 638 in order to improve player safety and help save the lives of current and future student athletes.

Thank you.