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February 20, 2023

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, Esq., Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee
Taylor House Office Building, Room 241
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 0733 – Youth Sport Safety Advisory Commission- SUPPORT

Dear Chair Pena Melnyk,

The American Physical Therapy Association Maryland is writing to register our support of House Bill 733 .

The purpose of this legislation is to establish a Youth Sports Safety Advisory Commission to study and make recommendations to minimize risk and maximize safety for youth athletes. The commission would be charged with:

- studying evidence–based policies and practices for maximizing safety for youth athletes at different age levels, with a concentration on youth athletes who are under the age of 15 years, and stages of brain development based on national research;
- studying ways to reduce injury risk levels to youth athletes at different ages; and
- making recommendations for the implementation of evidence–based best practices for minimizing injury risk for youth athletes.

Children and youth injuries are unlike adults' because their biomechanics are different. Kids are still growing physically, cognitively, and emotionally. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, youth sport related injuries are on the rise. Therefore it is vital that states look to legislation to improve health care for young athletes, maximize safety and look to ways to reduce injury, and return to play

For the reasons noted above we ask for a favorable report on House Bill 0733.

Sincerely,

JD Sheppard, PT, DPT
President, APTA Maryland