



U.S. Council for Athletes' Health  
1241 Dublin Road, Suite 100 | Columbus, OH 43205

January 16, 2024

Dear Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

As Chief Medical Officer of the Big Ten Conference and the President and CEO of U.S. Council for Athletes' Health, I am writing to give my full support for HB204/SB165 in Maryland. This bill would require secondary coaches to receive training in mental health.

Mental health issues are at a critical level amongst today's society, especially athletes. Being able to participate in athletics is a significant opportunity and can enhance the educational experience. However, mental health must be the top priority for every sport organization.

Coaches spend a significant amount of time with their teams and are in a special position to influence their athletes for a lifetime. Therefore, we must equip our coaches with the tools and resources to respond to a mental health emergency. If a coach is trained properly, they will be able to spot mental health warning signs and direct the athlete to proper resources and support.

The passing of this bill will save lives and protect the health and safety of young people.

Thank you for your time,

James Borchers, MD, MPH  
President and CEO  
U.S. Council for Athletes Health