



Maryland Soccer Foundation

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March 3, 2025

Maryland House of Delegates
The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB1272 - Youth Sports Safety Advisory Commission

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Executive Director of the Maryland SoccerPlex and the Soccer Association of Montgomery. The Maryland SoccerPlex is the largest single site sports facility in the State and the Soccer Association of Montgomery has approximately 6000 youth athletes in our program. I am writing to express our support for the creation of the Youth Sports Safety Advisory Commission with a proposed an amendment regarding the makeup of the commission members.

As youth sports continue to grow in popularity, we have seen an increase in health and safety issues around our young athletes. While concussion injuries seem to be at the forefront of most parents' minds, there are numerous other health and safety issues that must be accounted for as we move forward. Issues around increases in knee and other non-contact injuries, overuse injuries, and dangers arising from factors associated with climate change all must be addressed. This commission will allow the opportunity to have experts in these areas as well as others come together to make recommendations to the sports community and the legislature to enact policies, procedures, and when necessary, laws and regulations to keep our youth athletes safe.

The proposed amendment to this bill is related to the required membership of the commission. The listed members do a fantastic job of providing experts from an academic and medical approach to this issue. However, I have a fear that this commission may be missing out on vital input from the implementation side of the equation. I think it would be important to have representatives from the coaching and sport administration community, equipment manufacturers, and facility operators to provide insight into the practicality of implementation of any recommendations of the commission. I believe it would be beneficial to have these parties involved in the conversation throughout the process instead of bringing them in after the fact only to find that there will be implementation issues to overcome.



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The recommended amendment would include the following to Section 1(b)(4)

(xviii) one coach or sport organization administrator.

(xix) one representative from a sports equipment manufacturer.

(x) one sports facility operator.

Thank you for your consideration and we ask for a favorable report with amendment.

Respectfully,

Matthew Libber

Executive Director

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