

HCS HB 2388 -- YOUTH SPORTS BRAIN INJURY PREVENTION

SPONSOR: Fitzwater (144)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues in Education by a vote of 9 to 3. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Education by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill requires any municipality, business, or nonprofit organization that organizes a youth athletic activity where an activity fee will be charged to distribute a concussion and brain injury information sheet to each athlete participating in the activity. Each athlete's parent or guardian must sign the information form and submit it to the athletic activity governing body before the athlete may participate in the activity.

This bill further specifies that all coaches, umpires, referees, and other sport officials participating in the activity are required to complete initial on-line or in-person training and must receive updated training at least once every three years thereafter.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that there are many benefits to youth participating in sports, but there are also risks to their health, academics, and future. This bill builds upon the current concussion law and expands it to youth younger than seven, to parks and rec associations, and to nonprofit club teams. Right now we protect our kids within school teams but we also want to protect our kids that play within these other leagues. These injuries happen often and in every sport, not just football. Coaches need to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of concussions and in doing so be better able to direct players to medical attention.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Fitzwater; Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association Of Missouri; Stefanie West, Missouri Athletic Trainers Association; Scott Kimble, Missouri Council Of School Administrators; and Kenny Jackson, Missouri State Medical Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that some organizations, such as the YMCA and other non-school organizations, follow nationally recognized procedures for identifying concussions. The bill would apply concussion law designed for schools to these organizations.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri State Alliance Of YMCAs.