

PA13-41

HB6383

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| Education | 125-132, 155-171, 190, 192, 457-458, 496-502 | 36 |
| House | 1841-1858 | 18 |
| Senate | 2481-2495 | 15 |
| | | 69 |

S - 659

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2013**

**VOL. 56
PART 8
2153 - 2500**

17, Calendar 458, House Bill 638, Calendar page 17,
Calendar 460, House Bill 6506, Calendar page 16,
Calendar 442, Senate Bill 442 and then Calendar page
12, Calendar 357, House Bill 6349.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 17, Calendar 458, substitute for House Bill
number 6383, AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR
ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, favorable report of the Committee
on Education.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I move the joint
committee's favorable report in concurrence with the
House.

THE CHAIR:

On acceptance and passage in concurrence will you
remark?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Sir. This bill creates hiring standards
for school and school district athletic directors
requiring that all directors hired on or after October
1, 2013 meet the new standards. And it permits those
hired before that date to continue in their current
job so in a sense grandfathering in the existing
athletic directors. The House placed an amendment --
a clarifying amendment on the bill which I support.
This is a very important bill to help protect our
children in our schools to make sure that the athletic
directors are well qualified and doing the best job
that they can. And I urge passage. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Yes, Mr. President, on the bill. This is a very good bill and should be supported by everyone. We certainly do on this side of the aisle. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further? Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I'd like to yield to Senator McKinney.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney, do you accept the yield from Senator Fasano?

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Do I -- can I think about that for a little bit?

THE CHAIR:

It's up to you.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. I do. Thank you, Senator Fasano, for saving me an opportunity to ask Senator Stillman a question or two before the vote. Through you, Mr. President, to Senator Stillman. I'm just curious as to -- as to why now this bill was brought towards the Education Committee and what problem exists with athletic directors throughout the State of Connecticut that needs to be fixed? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. Through you. I appreciate the question. We had an extensive public hearing on the bill. It was very clear that the fact that aren't any standards within the State for athletic directors with whom we place our children's lives sometimes on a daily basis depending on how -- how athletic or how involved they are in their schools. This is something that we've been trying to do in the State for several years and I think we finally got our act together and have a bill that I believe is -- is comprehensive and workable. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you. And through you, Mr. President. And I do apologize I think as we all know for the first three months this session we were all busy with a lot of stuff and I have not -- did not review the OLR report from the public hearing on this bill. Does this bill apply to all athletic directors in public, private, parochial schools? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. The standards for the -- for this certification if you would like to put it that way of a school athletic director would apply to certainly anyone who -- they have to be certified. It is -- I believe that it is for all -- okay. An athletic director means an individual responsible for administering the athletic program of a school or school district under the jurisdiction of a local or regional board of education and who is responsible for

the supervision of athletic coaches. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. And I read that and my first reaction was since we're talking about the school -- school or school district under the jurisdiction of a local or regional board of education we're talking about public schools only. Is that correct? Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President. Yes.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And so then --

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. So then I have a son who attends a catholic school, this would not apply for example to his athletic director. Is that true? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President. That is correct but you might want to encourage it.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

You might want to encourage it.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Well -- thank you. And is it also true, through you, Mr. President, Senator Stillman that if there is currently an athletic director in one of our public high schools in the State of Connecticut who does not meet the requirements of this bill they would be grandfathered in. Is that correct? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, thank you, Mr. President. Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And through you, Mr. President. Are they required at some point to get the certification or are they just grandfathered in for however long their tenure might be? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President. Yes they are grandfathered and can continue in their position until they are no longer required in that position.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. And through you, Mr. President. I know section two -- section two talks about local or regional board -- boards of ed that employ an athletic coach and it says here so it shall require the athletic director or the immediate supervisor of such coach to evaluate the coach on an annual basis and provide such coach with a copy of the evaluation. Through you, Mr. President.

Do -- are we going to then be required to have our local boards of education come up with an evaluation form? Is the State Department of Education coming up with an evaluation form? Are -- I know I'm asking a lot of questions. I could parcel them out but I don't -- I think you know where I'm going. Are -- are -- can each district or could each school -- I have two high schools in my hometown of Fairfield, have their own evaluation form? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President. They -- they have to be evaluated as a certified personnel but certainly it will be up to the local school board and school district -- and I believe that answers the question. Through you, Sir.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Madam President. So then -- and I apologize for being somewhat repetitive. But then as -- as long as my board of education in Fairfield,

we'll take that as an example, says to the athletic director of each of the two high schools in Fairfield, Fairfield Ludlow and Fairfield Ward High School that the new State law requires you or if there's an immediate supervisor between the athletic director and the coach that they would have to evaluate each coach annually and then give the coach that evaluation. As long as they do that in compliance with however the board wants them to do it that's okay. Is that correct? Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Mr. President. Yes.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you. And I guess the reason why I'm not sure what problem we're trying to solve here is because I do have two kids in high school. They both play sports from J.V. sports to varsity sports, from full contact sports like football and hockey to less contact sports like tennis. My daughter plays soccer and lacrosse. So sports that are very subject to concussions which appear to be one of the most serious injuries that our young kids can have. Obviously broken bones, torn you know ACLs in your knee are very serious but concussions have long term ramifications - short and long term ramifications for our kids on their learning ability, et cetera.

And so I guess in my experience, Mr. President, I see a requirement that an athletic trainer is at every game, that both of my kids, my son who's a junior has had to have a concussion impact test as a freshman which lasted for two years. He had to have it again as a junior. My daughter who's freshman had to have a concussion impact test.

It seems that our -- our high school athletic departments have trainers at -- at facilities and at games because they're required to. Our kids can't participate unless they have concussion impact tests. I'm not sure what more this training requirement would bring to the job of the athletic director. Through you, Mr. President. I'm willing to learn.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I -- it sounds as though the schools that your children attend are very -- take very good care of their children. And not every school has that opportunity to do that. I believe that school athletic directors being certified and meeting certain standards are very important in a -- policy for the State of Connecticut. You know as we all know and you mentioned the concussion laws that were recently passed and -- and that's made quite a dent in reducing the number of long lasting concussions.

But it's interesting you would mention and I just read an article that ran in -- in the New York Times recently, actually it was May 11 and talking about hidden threats to young athletes. And it's not just about concussions now. It's also about sadly children who collapse on the field from heat stroke. It's children who collapse on the field because of problems that have gone undetected due to heart ailments. For whatever reason they were undetected.

By having an athletic director and it actually is mentioned in this article the value of that -- by having an athletic director who is -- has the knowledge of how to address those particular health concerns that can arise on -- on the athletic field or in the gymnasium I think is of great value to assuring that our children play sports safely. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And I -- I a hundred percent agree with everything except I don't know if the certification of the athletic director brings that protection. So for -- for example, I don't know because I only have two kids in high school. Does -- are -- are -- through you, Mr. President. They go to different high schools. They play in for schools that are parts of leagues.

So for example in -- down in Fairfield County there's the FSIAC, Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference I believe. There are some 17 to 20 different high schools in that league. My son plays in the Southern Connecticut Conference which has schools that go from Fairfield all the way through Guilford and Shelton and towns in between. I would think that if we are concerned about heat stroke, football players -- you know when I was in high school they used to have you know two-a-days they called and before school started in August. I don't think they do that anymore because that is become extremely dangerous. The importance of hydrating your athletes when they're practicing in extreme heat is something that has been taken much more seriously.

I guess I don't get the connection between the athletic director being certified and making sure that that translates to a policy that I would think would be standard and uniform for all coaches either in the State or in the individual leagues. I mean -- so I -- I'll try to form a question but it would seem to me that the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference which is -- runs all of for example high school sports in Connecticut would have a policy and I'm surprised that they -- they don't because I think they would that talks about what football programs and football coaches can do for practices with their kids which talks about how you treat and what requirements and precautions you have to do for heat exhaustion and concussion.

So I -- I guess, Mr. President, my question would be is Senator Stillman aware whether these types of policies exist either statewide or league wide? And -

- and then I would ask two follow up questions. If they do then why do we need this because then we would be making sure that the athletic directors make sure that their athletic programs comply with either league or State standards.

And if they don't isn't that a better way to get at the problem? Shouldn't we have uniform standards so that summertime football practice for all kids playing football in Connecticut is the same? I hope there's a question there. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. I think that's what this bill is doing is it's providing those uniform standards. The testimony that was given in the -- in the public hearing on this bill actually was quite extensive in terms of support for this bill. There was absolutely no expression of opposition to this proposal.

And the support for this idea is because here's -- just to read one of them this Director at Woodland Regional High School and the President of CAD testified in favor of the bill because he believes that defining the position and creating hiring standards is long overdue. Parts of athletics directors' responsibilities have grown dramatically.

Far more responsibility is placed upon athletic directors than has been in the past. Another -- the head -- the Coach's Association, the Executive Director also said the same thing that yes they try and make sure that every coach has a coaching permit required by law but it also teaches the student. It also is an opportunity to make sure that these athletic directors understand our bullying laws, understand how to deal with parent's complaints and also have -- make sure that the health and safety standards are followed. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. And it -- and -- I guess I'm up here asking some questions not because I'm in opposition nor would I expect there to be opposition but because -- you know sometimes when you -- when you deal with things personally, so two kids in high school playing high school sports, you tend to know a little bit too much to be just enough dangerous but not enough to know how to solve the problem. I don't know that this solves the problem. Are we requiring -- through you, Mr. President, are we requiring the coaches to have the same certification that we are asking the athletic directors? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes. Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. The bill calls for an athletic director whose administering the program for a school or school district has to ensure that at the -- the athletic coach in the athletic program holds a coaching permit issued by the State Board. Supervising -- and they have to supervise and evaluate the athletic coaches.

So they have to make sure that their coaches possess the knowledge and understanding of all the rules and regulations of the governing authority. So the coaches have to have a great deal of knowledge as well. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you. And -- and through you, Mr. President. I'm hoping and I will assume, you can correct me, that

the coaches certifications which I -- I was aware of and I appreciate you announcing that which is a better description than I could have given it, but that's also going to make sure that our coaches are aware of issues like our bullying laws, concussions, how to treat them, how to test for them, heat exhaustion. Is that -- is that fair that coaches are -- part of their certification includes all of that? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. Yes. That permit that is issued by the board would cover those particular areas.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you. And -- and I don't know but I'm going to make an assumption that not every school district in the State of Connecticut has an athletic director. If there are school districts and there may be very small towns -- if there are school districts that do not who -- who then operates as the athletic director in the schools and would that person have to have this certification? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. If they have a coach, that coach can certainly serve in both capacities as long as they're trained properly.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

And through you. Would the coaches' certification be sufficient or would the coach have to get this certification as well? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. Through you, Mr. President. Let me make it clear that the coaches have to have a special permit issued by the board whereas the athletic director actually has to be certified. So there is a bit of a difference. So a coach if they are asked by the school board to become the athletic director as well they would have to be certified.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McKinney.

SENATOR MCKINNEY:

Thank you, Senator Stillman. I appreciate it. You know we -- we have a lot of different size and types of school districts in the State of Connecticut. And you know from my -- from what I see the role and obligations and duties of the athletic directors vary wildly. And so I -- I've always thought that having State or league wide rules and procedures, making sure with trainers and coaches who are directly there with the student athletes every day was sufficient.

I don't know the need to add the athletic director to that list but I -- I don't see any harm in doing so given the fact that we are going to grandfather in all existing athletic directors who have not been

certified so nobody's going to lose their job. And I thank Senator Stillman for answering my questions.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark further on the bill? Remark further on the bill? Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I think we've covered this in an extensive conversation. I see someone rising because I may want to ask to put it on the Consent Calendar if there isn't any objection but there is objection. Again I urge passage of what I think is extremely and thoughtful and necessary legislation. Thank you, Sir.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Mr. Clerk, please announce the pendency of a roll call vote and the machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Have all members voted? If all members have voted, please check the board to make sure your vote is accurately recorded. If all members have voted the machine will be closed and the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6383.

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| Total Number Voting | 36 |
| Necessary for Adoption | 19 |
| Those voting Yea | 34 |
| Those voting Nay | 2 |
| Those absent and not voting | 0 |

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes in concurrence with the House.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, if would mark all items previously marked go should be marked passed retaining their place on the Calendar. And if the Clerk would call the items on the Consent Calendar so that we might proceed to a vote on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page five, Calendar 229, Senate Bill 1027, Calendar 232, Senate Bill number 984. On Calendar page nine, Calendar 336, House Bill 6529, Calendar 337, House Bill 5310. Also on page nine Calendar 338, House Bill 6313 and Calendar 339, House Bill 6315. On page ten, Calendar 345, House Bill 5970. And on page 13, Calendar 393, Senate Bill number 872. Page 18, Calendar 468, House Bill 5388. Page 27, Calendar 561, House Bill 6641 and Calendar 565, House Bill 6346. And on page 40, Calendar 302, Senate Bill 1016.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The machine will be opened, vote on a Consent Calendar.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call on today's Consent Calendar in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

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| Total number voting | 145 |
| Necessary for passage | 73 |
| Those voting yea | 126 |
| Those voting Nay | 19 |
| Those absent and not voting | 5 |

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 201.

THE CLERK:

On Page 13 of today's Calendar, Calendar Number 201, Substitute House Bill 6383 AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, Favorable Report of the Committee on Education.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's still good to see you up there. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The question is acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill. Will you remark, Representative Fleischmann?

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

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Thank you, Madam Speaker. As its title indicates, this bill regards the hiring standards and qualifications of athletic directors and the Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO Number 6110. I would ask that the Clerk please call and that I be given permission to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Will the Clerk please call LCO Number 6110, designated to be House "A".

THE CLERK:

LCO 6110 to Substitute Bill 6383, House "A"
offered by Representatives Fleischmann, Davis, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize. Without objection, Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Quite simply, this Amendment would do three fundamental things. One, it would extend the time for people to meet the qualifications that are enumerated in the bill by about four months.

It would clarify that those holding athletic director positions prior to October 1, 2013 may

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continue to be so employed, even after passage of this measure.

And, Madam Speaker, I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule "A". Let me try your minds. All those in favor please signify by saying Aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

All those opposed, Nay? The Ayes have it. The Amendment is adopted. Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Ackert of the 8th District, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ACKERT (8th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This Amendment that just passed makes a good bill even better, and the profession of athletic directors was looking for this piece of legislation. It solidified their position in the education field. It puts credentials behind them so that it gives validity to the job that they do and that they do so well.

What the pursuit of the Amendment did that was worked on by a bipartisan way as the good Chairman did mention, extended it because we are going to require them to get some training and the July 1st original date would have been a time constraint.

They have all summer now to get those credentials and this bill is a good bill and it should pass.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, sir. Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Pamela Sawyer of the 55th. You have the floor, madam.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Madam Speaker, with a Rhode Island accent, yes, you dropped the R at the end.

A question through you to the proponent of the bill as amended.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Please proceed, madam.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

The type of credentialing that is needed, Mr. Chairman, is that something that is easily obtainable in the state, and through multiple facilities?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I believe the answer to that question is yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

And through you, Madam Speaker, is there a significant cost to obtaining that particular credentialing, and my thought is for those people who are just about to be hired, they perhaps are either, in our circumstances our athletic directors are also teachers, perhaps they are teachers on the low end of the pay scale.

If you could just, if you have a feel for how much it costs to have something like these credentials?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. First, I'd like to point out for someone who is about to be hired, if they're hired prior to October 1st of this year, then

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they do not necessarily have to worry about the credentialing that we've discussed.

If they're hired after October 1st, they would need to follow this course.

I don't know the cost but what I do know is that the athletic directors who sought this new clarification and regime thought that it was reasonable and well worth making sure that you had a standard level of professionalism across athletic directors. Through you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

I thank the gentleman for his answers. You know, ladies and gentlemen, we have at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the school year, the beginning of the next year, usually a lot of things that the school districts have to see to, to make sure all their ducks are in order.

The opening of a new school year is usually a very crushed time because of different mandates that we have put on the different school districts for the different thing that they need to have done and accomplished.

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Moving this from July 1 to October 1, I think is a very practical way to put something like this in place. My only concern is if we have perhaps a transition between one person and the next one if they get caught on one side of the October 1st and the other, it might cause a bit of a problem. But I appreciate the extension out because it lets the school systems get started and I hope it is a reasonable cost for these people to be able to get the next credentialing, because I'm sure after October 1st, they're going to want to have it in their hot little hand, particularly in cases of someone who wishes to move school districts or move from one school to the other, because it does make a difference between a school, differentiates between a school director and a system-wide director.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Representative. Representative Shaban.

REP. SHABAN (135th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. If I may, a question, through you to the proponent.

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A question to Representative Fleischmann. Please proceed, sir.

REP. SHABAN (135th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of small school districts, although mine aren't that small any more. I guess my question or concern arises from the sudden lessening of an ability to kind of shape what you want your athletic director to do, potentially.

You know, for instance, let's say you school doesn't have intramurals. Let's say your school has different types of sports. Let's say your school decides it wants its athletic director to focus on A, B, and C, but not you know, X, Y, and Z.

I wasn't at the public hearing, so really what I'm just looking for is some insight and maybe some support on behalf of small school districts. How much ability would a small school district have to shape their needs without the state telling them that no, your athletic director must do X, you know, must do all these things. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

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Through you, Madam Speaker. First, the example that Representative Shaban used to have intramurals was removed from the bill under House Amendment "A". So whether a district has them or not, those are no longer in the bill.

With regard to other areas, so what the athletic directors told us in public hearing was that this provided good guidelines, that they appreciated, that they felt matched the appropriate duties of a district or school athletic director while allowing the flexibility that districts would require as they set up their jobs with the specific requirements that they want for their districts.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Shaban.

REP. SHABAN (135th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the gentleman for his response.

Generally, I am not in favor of big one-size-fits-all approaches but I'm reading through the testimony. I listened to the gentleman. I listened to the Ranking Member. I'm going to continue to

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listen to the debate but I'm warming to the concept.

So thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, sir. Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Hoydick, you have the floor, madam.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

Thank you, Madam Chair. A few questions to the proponent of the bill, if I may, through you?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Please proceed.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

Madam Chair, I do support this concept and this bill. However, I do have some questions regarding the lack of a fiscal note.

Some districts have separate bargaining units for supervisors and for teachers, and in this case, this clearly defines the athletic director as a supervisor, and for those that are existing in the teachers' bargaining unit, would this automatically move them to the supervisory bargaining unit? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

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Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I'm not sure, but I'll just read the fiscal note developed by our Office of Fiscal Analysis.

The bill, which creates hiring standards and establishes duties for school and school district athletic directors is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as the changes are procedural in nature.

So, you know, our Office of Fiscal Analysis reaches out to the State Department of Education and to local districts to try and come up with its estimates and those are what we rely on, and so I would stand with the Office of Fiscal Analysis in that statement.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Hoydick.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the kind gentleman for his answer.

However, having been a board of ed member and chair and bargaining unit member, and across the table from the bargaining unit, I know very well that if

there is a change in director or a change in the scope of work that the salary will be commensurate and will go, possibly go into another bargaining unit, so that may be something that we want to look at further because this will be a mandate to our municipalities. So that's number one.

Secondly, there is a supervisory component that goes along with this and those are criteria, which the Co-Chairman has identified. There's additional training that will need to go into place with this.

So my question, through you, Madam Speaker, is, will this be part of the professional development of that position in the district and will be up to each district to decide how that professional development would be requested or met? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Madam Speaker. You know, as I read the bill it is silent on the question that my good colleague has raised, which means that there is local discretion.

I would expect in many instances, individuals would themselves seek to go ahead and attain the

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certification so that they could apply for certain jobs that they want.

There might be other cases where a district wanting to retain an employee would provide it, but it's left in the great Connecticut tradition to local discretion.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Hoydick.

REP. HOYDICK (120th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I love that answer. Thank you, Representative Fleischmann.

I do support the bill, Madam Speaker. My athletic directors from our town have contacted me, and as I said before, I think this is another step in responsible education.

Again, my concerns are additional costs to municipalities through the lack of a fiscal note. I think there will be some. And then eventually as we make our way through the teacher evaluation process, which we are currently doing now, this may also impact districts.

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So I would just hope that we'll be able to steer clear of any additional problems that we may have with this because the concept is very, very good.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, madam. Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Paul Davis, you have the floor, sir, of the 117th.

REP. DAVIS (117th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Good afternoon.

REP. DAVIS (117th):

Madam Speaker, the athletic directors have worked over a number of years in order to improve their professional standards. This bill is the result of their work and the outstanding work of our Education Committee. I'd like to thank the Chair and the Ranking Member for the work that they've done.

In answer to some of the concerns that have been discussed on the Floor, the current athletic directors, about 98 percent of them are certified with this program. It requires four courses. The course

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work is about \$60 to \$100 per course. The courses will be available both on line and through the Athletic Directors Association at TIAC offices in Cheshire.

As far as the certification issues go and supervision, there are actually two levels of athletic directors in this bill. One is one that requires an O92, which certainly would be an administrative certification. The other one could be a teacher or someone who's not a member of the bargaining unit, which would not require the supervisory position.

So in either case, I don't think there would be a tremendous change. I do agree that local school boards may have to consider the training and experience of the athletic director in the salary requirements, but overall, I think this is a very positive step for our education system. Interestingly enough, this is the first time we've even defined athletic director position in statute. Before today or before passage of this legislation there is no definition for an athletic director.

So I'd urge my colleagues to support passage of the bill. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

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Thank you, Representative. Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended? Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Kokoruda, you have the floor, madam.

REP. KOKORUDA (101st):

Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to thank the Education Committee for bringing this forward and for Representative Davis for his leadership on it also.

I have heard from my athletic directors, too, and what this addresses, and we heard this in public hearing again and again, is the very, very high turnover rate for athletic directors in our state, and I think sometimes these folks come in and really don't realize what they're getting into. It's a big job.

And the athletic director who used to be maybe a coach and for a small stipend also was the athletic director, that has changed. This is truly now a position that's part of the administrative team of each board of education.

So I support the bill and thanks for the leadership thing.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, madam. Will you care to remark further on the bill before us? Will you care to

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remark further on the bill before us? Will you care
to remark?

If not, staff and guests please come to the Well
of the House. Members take your seats. The machine
will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by Roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by Roll.

Please return to the Chamber immediately.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

And now, have all Members voted? Have all
Members voted? Please check the board to determine if
your vote has been properly cast.

If so, the machine will be locked and the Clerk
will take a tally. And will the Clerk please announce
the tally.

THE CLERK:

Bill Number 6383 as amended by House Amendment
"A".

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Total Number Voting | 146 |
| Necessary for Passage | 74 |
| Those voting Yea | 145 |
| Those voting Nay | 1 |
| Those absent and not voting | 4 |

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The bill as amended passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 336.

THE CLERK:

Yes, Madam Speaker. On Page 28 of today's Calendar, House Number, House Calendar Number 366, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Development, Substitute House Bill 5388
AN ACT REQUIRING CITIES AND TOWNS TO DESIGNATE A
VETERANS' SERVICE CONTACT PERSON.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Jack Hennessey, you have the floor, sir.

REP. HENNESSEY (127th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The question is acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill. Representative Hennessey, you have the floor, sir.

REP. HENNESSEY (127th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. What this bill does is mandate that all 169 municipalities across the state

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loan more than when you reach the cap, you know.

If you're going way over, the more loans you make the more money you get from us within the budget. But this puts another burden on it.

I'd like to point out that it's the citizens of the state who determine how many books go out of these different libraries, because they choose to go to those libraries. This isn't something that a library decides to just bill us for you know, 100,000 loans. Those are actual transactions, which we attract, so.

REP. LAVIELLE: Okay, thank you very much. I appreciate that feedback.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Any other questions for Mr. Wiggin? If not, thank you very much.

KENDALL WIGGIN: Appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. We now move to Trish Witkin to be followed by Helen Higgins and her chorus.

TRISH WITKIN: Good afternoon, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Stillman and the Members of our Education Committee. My name is Trish Witkin. I'm the Athletic Director at Glastonbury High School. I'm also the immediate Past President of the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors.

I'm here today in support of House Bill 6383 AN ACT CONCERNING THE HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS. You have my testimony in front of you as well as testimony submitted by others, so I will not read from that.

I would like to, however, just point out a few highlights, if I may. There have been several

legislative mandates in the past decade that have impacted the position of athletic director tremendously, and yet there is no mention of that position, the position of athletic director in the statute.

The responsibilities of the athletic director have grown in that timeframe and our experienced ADs are retiring and many of those filling the positions are entering the profession not adequately prepared, especially if they're not an educator. They are ill equipped for the rigor and demand of the job and are quite frankly, becoming overwhelmed.

Statistically, 67 percent of our current athletic directors have less than five years experience and of that, 15 or 20 percent of that population annually are brand new.

What's even more staggering is that half of those will not return for a second year.

This bill recognizes the magnitude of the position of athletic director and serves to define that position.

Additionally, it sets qualifications needed to hold that position. This will enhance student safety and diminish liability exposure to districts.

And I'm here today to urge the Committee to support the House bill and move it forward. But it is critical that language be added to that bill that serves to protect those currently in the position and a suggested language of what should be added is included in my testimony previously submitted. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. Questions from Members of the Committee? Representative Davis.

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REP. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hi, Trish.

TRISH WITKIN: Hi.

REP. DAVIS: First of all, I'd like to congratulate your organization for its efforts to raise the level of professionalism. Very often we are looking at situations where our Committee is asking organizations and groups like yours to do something and here we know you've come to us with the concerns that you've raised.

You mentioned that there's nothing in statute. You do refer in your testimony to some previous regulations and that you would wish to hold harmless athletic directors who have those current credentials.

How are they different? Could you just give us a brief idea of what a person has to be, have now to be an athletic director?

TRISK WITKIN: Sure. Under the current regulations, there are three ways that you can go about being an athletic director. First and foremost if you have district responsibilities or multiple schools you would need to have, be in possession of the administrator's certificate, the O-92.

The next level would be a Connecticut educator who also holds a coaching permit.

And the third level would be an individual who strictly holds a coaching permit.

It's important to mention that a coaching permit can be obtained by somebody who has graduated high school, who has obtained first aid and CPR and has taken the required concussion education module that's currently offered.

The new language would serve to eliminate that level where you could strictly come in with a coaching permit and included in the other two levels previously mentioned, would allow an individual to come in who possesses a national certification that is deemed appropriate by the State Department of Education and would be in essence, equivalent for the purposes of athletics to those regulations that are already in place.

So for example, you can be a certified athletic administrator through the national program I mentioned, and that would be equivalent to a person who holds a teaching certification, so a district could hire for that type of position someone who has a Connecticut teaching certification or the CAA.

And the next level would be the certified master athletic administrator. The district could hire an individual with the O-92 or the CMAA as it's referred to.

REP. DAVIS: And I know we have many people who do have those types of certifications in Connecticut. But if we don't, or a school district doesn't, would it be incumbent upon the school district to pay for an individual to get those certifications, and/or would the person have to do it himself and what type of costs are involved?

TRISK WITKIN: Typically the professional development would be up to the individual to obtain those certifications.

We currently, through the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors or CAAD, we do offer the professional development course work that is necessary to obtain the national certifications that I mentioned.

I can share with you that our athletic directors have taken hundreds of those courses over the years and we continue to offer them on several occasions during a school year as well as in summer. There are summer opportunities as well as you can attend the national conference.

So much like your certification requirements now, you would be on your own to take care of those classes at your cost.

REP. DAVIS: And just one final question, Mr. Chair. So basically this would require no real expense on the part of a local school district or a regional school district.

TRISH WITKIN: That is correct. There would be no additional cost by implementing this change.

And I would just also like to add that many of our athletic directors already hold that national certification. They've already sought those, so they would already have that and not be impacted.

REP. DAVIS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. Other questions from Members of the Committee? If not, thank you. Oh, Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Can I just get some clarification on the last comment about no cost. I mean, if you're hiring somebody at that level, they're in the administrator's union with the commensurate salary, correct?

TRISH WITKIN: Yes. The district has the ability to assign the position of athletic director based on what their responsibilities are in that particular district, so there would be, you would be replacing a person that was already be

in that position. It wouldn't necessarily mean you had to hire somebody at that higher level.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: But if you were placing that person in that position who now is in at that level of certification, they're going to be in the administrator's union and entitled to whatever salary and benefits are part of that negotiated contract, right? That may not be the case now.

TRISH WITKIN: I would, I think the position would remain, it would be the district's decision to hire the person with the CMAA and if they didn't, they would maintain that position in that union as is.

It's not a new position to any school district. Every high school in the state has an athletic director.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Right. It's a new certification.

TRISH WITKIN: It's in addition to the certification requirements that are already in place. It's another option for districts to go out and hire qualified athletic directors.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Representative McCrory.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you. A question. (Inaudible). If this legislation passed as is, someone who has an O-92 now can also be not only an administrator, but also athletic director at the same time?

TRISH WITKIN: There are people in the state who do sit in two positions. There are several that are assistant principals and are athletic directors at the same time, and that would be the district's decision how they divided up the responsibilities of their positions.

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REP. MCCRORY: Currently.

TRISH WITKIN: Correct.

REP. MCCRORY: You have people who are administrators who are also athletic directors, because I know they can't coach.

TRISH WITKIN: Correct. There are across the state several that are assistant principals and athletic directors at the same time.

REP. MCCRORY: Okay. So the only person that quote, unquote, could be hurt by this is the individual who's not a teacher and who do not have, who do not possess the certification that we're looking for them to possess, the higher level certification. Correct?

TRISH WITKIN: Well there already are regulations in place that establish the certifications that you are supposed to have, so anybody who is currently in a position should be in possession of that proper credential.

REP. MCCRORY: The minimal qualifications that we have now, but after this legislation is passed, if they don't possess those credentials, if they don't go after them, pursue them, then they will be out of that position. Correct?

TRISH WITKIN: They have been made well aware of this potential legislation going through. We've been talking about it for more than a year and we have put the professional development measures in place to assist athletic directors in obtaining that level of certification I referred to earlier.

So we've been offering the course work for them and as well as providing them with information on other opportunities, so they certainly have been on notice that this is a potential, and we've encouraged that even just for the own

personal professional development obtaining that certification is significantly relevant to the field of athletics.

REP. MCCRORY: Okay, thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Any other questions? If not, thank you for your testimony and your time.

TRISK WITKIN: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: We now go to Helen Higgins who, as I understand it will be joined by Judith Carroll, Anita Mielert, Henry Talmage, Amy Paterson and David Sutherland and I understand that all of you will together abide by the three-minute rule, which would be both unusual, unique and welcome.

HELEN HIGGINS: And that we are. That we are. Thank you. Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, Members of the Education Committee, this is, oh, they're not surrounding me. I thought well, no, no, no, that's all right. Oh wait, that's my three minutes.

HB6357

I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. I see a lot of friends here and I want to say to my right is Anita Mielert from the Connecticut Preservation Action and then Henry Talmage from the Connecticut Farmland Bureau, Frank Hagemann from Hartford Preservation Alliance, Amy Paterson from the Connecticut Land Conservation Council and Judith Carroll from the Connecticut Housing Coalition and David Sutherland is absent at the moment. But we are all here --

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for that introduction. I just want to note to our Clerks that that introduction should not count against your three minutes.

HELEN HIGGINS: Oh, thank you.

as I took over chair, Senate Chair of this Committee has been seeing the passion that people have for educating our children and it truly is something that's contagious.

So we appreciate the Graustein Foundation's continuing support and your collaboration with all the other foundations, and please let them know that we look forward to continuing to work together and be even better.

DAVID NEE: Thank you for those kind and generous remarks and I surely will pass this on because it is a tribute to all of us.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. Now there's no guarantee that the next person is going to be treated as nicely. We'll see. But thank you. Brian Fell, followed by Lucy Nolan. Welcome, sir.

BRIAN FELL: Good afternoon, Senator Stillman and Members of the Education Committee. I'm not too worried about that as I'm an athletic director. I'm used to getting some abuse.

My name is Brian Fell and I am here to speak in support of House Bill 6383 AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS. I have been an athletic director for over 20 years in the State of Connecticut. I am also the current President of the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors.

In the 20 years that I've been in this position, the job has grown tremendously in scope and responsibility. In that time, significant social, safety and legislative changes have impacted our jobs to name a few, coaching certification laws and continuing education requirement of coaches, coach evaluations, concussion education, bullying,

hazing, social media and the list goes on and on.

This is all in addition to the normal multitude of issues and responsibilities of maintaining a safe and educationally sound school-based athletic program.

Like the Legislature, our primary goal is to provide safe, positive experiences for our student athletes. Yet in all the laws, rules and expectations, there is no statutory language that delineates what is expected of an athletic director or establishes sufficient qualifications to do the job effectively.

Our profession experiences a 15 to 20 percent turnover every year. Close to 70 percent don't make it past five years. Athletic director candidates are under-qualified, ill-prepared, and once they get in the position, they are often overwhelmed.

This bill would go a long way to solve that problem without establishing a new certification. However, for those ADs who have persevered, gotten trained, and have risen to the challenge, I would ask that language be added to allow those ADs currently credentialed and serving in the position to not be impacted by this bill. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. We appreciate your hard work as well in your profession.

I'm fascinated with the statistic we heard previously and now about how there's a 15 to 20 percent turnover. Each year?

BRIAN FELL: Each year, yes, ma'am.

SENATOR STILLMAN: And 70 percent don't last more than five years.

BRIAN FELL: Yes, ma'am.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Why are they hired? I mean, there must be some indication by the school system that based on this person's credentials that they might not be up to the job.

BRIAN FELL: Well I think that is part of the problem is we do get applicants that are not necessarily teachers and do not have the training. They don't know what to expect of this job. This is not a job that's well known.

The common perception is the athletic director, oh he's the guy that orders buses and officials and he's a PE teacher. That's the common perception because most of us when we grew up, that's what the athletic director was in our minds.

And they get into the position, when they realize the statutory requirements and they realize the training requirements and the supervisory requirements, they're just simply overwhelmed. It's much more than they expected and they'll go for a year, they'll give it a shot and they'll say, this is just not worth what the schools are paying me to do this for and they'll move on.

SENATOR STILLMAN: I appreciate that. I just wish those folks who do the hiring were more aware of what the job really entails, but I am also interested in knowing how these other issues as you stated in your testimony about hazing and bullying and harassment and the use of electronic and social media have increased the duties of athletic directors. Could you give us an example without names?

BRIAN FELL: The obvious case is, all these laws and all these regulations have to be implemented on a very close level with students and with

parents, so there's a significant training component for our coaches.

We need to make sure our coaches understand what they can and can't be doing, what they need to be doing statutorily, what sort of communication they need to have with parents.

We need to effectively have these communicated to parents in our pre-season meetings, in our handbooks, so that in itself takes up a fair amount of time and energy just making sure that all the people that work for us and some of our sub-coaching staffs of 30 and 40 coaches and thousands of athletes that come with thousands of parents and they need to understand and follow these rules and regulations to make sure our athletes are safe.

SENATOR STILLMAN: (Inaudible) understanding of what athletic directors do is really, I think that lack of understanding is shared by parents as well, and I would assume that with all that's going on with bullying and hazing and other types of problems in the schools.

Is it something that would be seen more in an athletic venue as opposed to a classroom? By the child. I'm not talking about the teachers.

BRIAN FELL: I think it's just an additional avenue. There is, when you're on an athletic field, when you're in a locker room you have different relationships than you would have in a classroom and the nature of the different relationships generates different types of, perhaps bullying or hazing or different communication methods that athletes would have, that give them opportunities to do things differently than they would in the classroom.

I wouldn't say the problems are any worse or any better than it would be during the school day as far as the standard student.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. Anyone have any questions? Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS: Hi, Brian. I know you mentioned in your testimony that it would create no new certifications but we, the bill does talk about standards. It mentions standards. Those standards are from where?

BRIAN FELL: The NIAAA, primarily, as well as through the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors. We have course work where we can educate and we can get the certifications for individuals who want these certifications already exist through the national body.

REP. DAVIS: Okay. So this is not a Connecticut teaching or administrative certification. It's a certification as an athletic director.

BRIAN FELL: Correct.

REP. DAVIS: So an athletic director would not have to be an administrator?

BRIAN FELL: That's correct. An athletic director would not have to be an administrator with an O-92 through the State of Connecticut. They would be able to get certified through the national body.

REP. DAVIS: Now, you do have that O-92, don't you?

BRIAN FELL: I do have the O-92, yes, sir.

REP. DAVIS: And you're an assistant principal?

BRIAN FELL: I am.

REP. DAVIS: And where do you find the time?

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BRIAN FELL: Well, I'm going here back to my high school and I'll be there until 10:00 o'clock tonight.

REP. DAVIS: Good luck. Thank you. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Representative Genga.

REP. GENGA: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Does that include shoveling snow?

BRIAN FELL: Believe it or not, I did have a shovel in my hand at my school the other day, yes.

REP. GENGA: A suggestion obviously is that we're putting people in the positions that aren't qualified.

BRIAN FELL: That is our belief, yes.

REP. GENGA: Okay. Do you have any idea, or any situations you could describe, either a percentage of people who are in those kind of positions without proper skills or situations that have occurred?

BRIAN FELL: I don't have the numbers in front of me. It would be difficult for me to give you an accurate count, but anecdotally I know of some people who have taken the athletic director positions, have moved into the position with simply the coaching permit, not an educator.

They take their minimum requirements, the concussion course, the coaching permit course and then they take over the job and simply say, I can't do this now. This is not what I expected it to be.

I can't give you numbers. I don't have those figures in front me.

REP. GENGA: Okay.

BRIAN FELL: So, I'm sorry.

REP. GENGA: I'm just trying to get a feel of, if something is going on now, how great is the impact? How great is the scope of that, that it requires this kind of legislation?

BRIAN FELL: I think what you're looking at is the impact as it trickles across to other schools and as it moves across the years.

When we're having difficulty finding the qualified people who do take over the job and then move on very quickly within a couple of years, the level of retraining that has to occur and the level of having to re-establish these connections between schools and having to have all these policies and procedures reiterated again and again when somebody new takes over a position.

We all know how that transition can be very difficult in a leadership position. I think that's the overall impact. And when you talk about up to 70 percent of our profession is less than five years of experience and that continues year after year, I think the overall impact on individual schools is great and an impact on the state at large.

Because as an athletic director when I'm dealing with 25 or 30 other schools over the course of a year, establishing sportsmanship rules and getting our leagues to function properly and getting our contests together, when we have, I won't say a weak link in that connection, it impacts all of us because now I need to communicate to all the athletic directors in my league, how things need to be done.

And when we have four and five athletic directors in my league. We have a small

league. There's only 14 of us, and eight of us have less than three years of experience in that league, it's like we're constantly reinventing the wheel within our league trying to make sure our athletes are getting the treatment they're supposed to be getting.

And when I send my athletes to another school that I expect that their rules and regulations are being followed and put into place to make my athletes safe when my athletes are at their school.

So it impacts the entire state, not just the schools that have individuals that might not be qualified for the positions they've accepted.

REP. GENGA: Coming from a school system, I understand what you're saying because we had, at the high school I was at, we have probably 20 years for an athletic director and then the next six years we've had three different athletic directors, each one promoted, though, moved up.

But I understood how their requirements were, and it was a 50 percent job. They taught for 50 percent of the time and 50 percent of the time they functioned as an athletic director, because some who were qualified wouldn't take the job, they said if it was under those circumstances. And I'm sure that's what's happening to all the school systems.

One of the things we were asked to do and you suggested here is to grandfather the current ones.

BRIAN FELL: Yes, sir.

REP. GENGA: Okay. My comment to that would be, if you're telling us there's people out there that aren't qualifying, should we grandfather them?

BRIAN FELL: I think the people we need to protect, the people that come into the job and as I said, they've risen to the challenge and they have taken our courses and they have set up the networks to improve themselves and to get themselves into the positions where they are doing a fantastic job and it's been hard work for them to get to that point, by a lot of people to get them to that point, I think we need to protect those people.

REP. GENGA: I don't suggest we don't protect them. I was suggesting that there should be some lead time for which they get qualifications, the certifications.

BRIAN FELL: Yeah. I certainly think that would be --

REP. GENGA: So to me, that would be more appropriate.

BRIAN FELL: I can certainly see that as being one avenue, yes, sir, to be able to give them some (inaudible). This is going to be the new reg, you've now got within a couple of years where you need to get all this required coursework done, otherwise you'll no longer meet the statute --

REP. GENGA: Sure.

BRIAN FELL: -- and I absolutely think that would be an appropriate way to go.

REP. GENGA: The last question is, would there be any cost to the town?

BRIAN FELL: No, sir. The current situation that towns have with their athletic directors, they would continue, whatever their arrangements were. Some are paid administratively. Some are 50/50. Some are paid stipends. It's kind

of all over the board in the State of Connecticut.

When they were to lose an athletic director through retirement or resignation, they would be able to hire somebody back into that same position at the same salary with the same expense, but those people would have to have the required coursework and certifications so it would not increase any costs on the towns.

REP. GENGA: Nor would they bear any cost for their people to get certification?

BRISN FELL: No, sir, that would not be expected.

REP. GENGA: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. Any other questions? Representative Kokoruda, followed by Senator Bartolomeo.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you for today. Well, I'm someone that actually has sat on a search committee for an athletic director and I agree with you.

One of the things you might want to add an amendment to this is to put in a course at Dale Carnegie because dealing with parents, they're a major issue.

BRIAN FELL: It's an acquired skill, yes.

REP. KOKORUDA: An acquired skill. And I know you very kindly mentioned it a couple times. Just a simple question.

What concludes a town from just, when they put their search committee together expecting someone with certification. Why do we have to mandate this? Why do we have to put this in law? I don't know why we just can't let the

town decide that they really, really want to get somebody with this certification?

BRIAN FELL: They could establish that as a criteria but they haven't. So if they haven't up until now. Unless there was some impetus to do so I don't see why they would.

REP. KOKORUDA: Excuse me, Madam Chair, through you, you mean the towns, no towns ever do this?

BRIAN FELL: Oh, some towns do.

REP. KOKORUDA: And if they're aware of this certification?

BRIAN FELL: Are they aware of the actual certification?

REP. KOKORUDA: Right. Right. If they were aware, I would think they would look into this.

BRIAN FELL: Certainly, we would like every athletic director to have that, but it's just not the case, so why they're not? I don't know.

REP. KOKORUDA: It might just be lack of information, not knowing it exists, but thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative. Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Thank you. Just a follow up to Representative Genga's question. I guess I'm not certain how someone with additional certification and qualifications would not then require higher pay.

BRIAN FELL: I'm not sure of the question.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: When Representative Genga asked you if it might cost more?

BRIAN FELL: Yeah. The positions are, in my district for example, the position is established. It's got a set salary. When I retire in five years, three months and two days, the person who replaces me would be expected to get right into that same administrative salary scale that I'm at.

So my town would not have to pay any more, any additional money. They would just say, okay, if you're going to be an adequate candidate for this position, you will have this certification and if you're not, if you don't have these certifications and requirements then don't apply for the job.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: I apologize for not knowing this, but in your position, is it part of a union?

BRIAN FELL: Yes, in my position, yes. But that's not the case throughout the whole state.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Because I would assume it were similar to like teacher's steps, you know, with different degrees of certification and therefore it would be a higher level of pay, and maybe I'm missing something.

BRIAN FELL: In my position, because I'm part-time athletic director and also assistant principal, I am part of a union and I do have a salary scale that's on step and such, but that's not the case throughout the whole state.

There are some that are teachers that are in teacher positions that then have an additional stipend paid to them.

There are some that are not teachers at all and they're just paid a salary, a part-time salary to be athletic director part-time.

So it's kind of all over the board, but there would be nothing in this bill that would preclude a district from hiring somebody into that exact same spot at the same salary, which is requiring that their applicants have a minimum certification level.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Thank you. Except maybe a very good negotiator with that extra participant but thank you, I appreciate your answer.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Just following on in the discussion. Just reading the draft language I'm having a hard time squaring Section 1 and Section 2 with the discussion we've been having because I appreciate that part, that one avenue for certification is the master's certificate from the NIAAA.

But the other part is a 10-145b certificate, which is essentially a certified staff position.

BRIAN FELL: Yeah.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: And so Section 2 says that local boards have to have their coaches evaluated by an AD or in accordance with the provisions of Section 1.

And Section 1(e) says, the AD shall be responsible for evaluation and shall hold the certificate pursuant to Section 10-145b.

I read the confluence of those two sections as saying that Section 2 requires evaluations and if you're going to evaluate, you have to be 10-145b certified.

BRIAN FELL: Under the current regulations, if you're an athletic director that evaluates

staff, you need to have the current state 0-92 certification to evaluate staff.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Right.

BRIAN FELL: If you're not an athletic director that evaluates staff, then you don't need the 0-92.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Right.

BRIAN FELL: You can just be a certified athletic director.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: And Section 2, I read Section 2 as saying essentially, you must have your coaches evaluated by an AD and that AD has to be certified, and that's one way to read the way these two sections work together.

And I guess I would couple that with Section D, which says that ADs, what we put in Section D is a job description, which we would typically leave to a local board of education to do its job description for an AD, and Subsection d says that they shall supervise and evaluate the coaches.

So reading these together, it seems to me, and maybe it's not the intent. I'm just saying you can read these together as saying, a district must hire an AD to supervise its coaches and that AD must be 10-145b certified.

And that means that districts that do not currently have that, would be required to hire certified staff and pay for it. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that. I'm just saying there's a way to read this in that fashion.

Some districts right now have direct supervision, the smaller ones in particular, have direct supervision by superintendents, for example --

BRIAN FELL: Right.

REP. D'AGOSTONO: -- and they cut out the middle man and that saves them as a smaller district, a lot of money. Bigger districts like Hamden and Meriden, we have administrative unions that certified ADs and that's the way you've got to do it for a larger district.

I'm just concerned about what I read as imposing that model on every district around the state that may not necessarily need it, but maybe I'm reading it wrong, and if I'm not, let me know.

BRIAN FELL: Yeah, I don't, I don't want to say I don't read it that way. The intent here, and I think the language is that, if you're responsible for evaluation and supervision, you currently need the O-92. This now also gives the, this new bill would now give the option to be certified in CMAA through the national body as an additional option to that if they don't have the O-92.

And then the second tier of that is, if you're not responsible for the evaluation and the supervision of the coaches such as a superintendent or a principal, that you don't need the O-92. You currently need to have the certifications under 10-145b or now you have the option of hiring someone who is certified a CAA through the national body.

So it gives the options of doing those without requiring it but it establishes the minimum that says, if you're going to be an athletic director you're going to have one or the other. We're not going to hire people that are not certified to be doing this at all.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: If you have the latter, though, you can't evaluate, I don't think.

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BRIAN FELL: You can't evaluate. That's correct.
That would normally --

REP. D'AGOSTINO: We'll get the clarification from LCO on that. It's just the way I'm reading it and maybe it's not how it's intended.

And just a final point or question. Thank you for, I think the dialogue you just had clarified another point which is the turnover that you experienced, the 10 to 15 percent.

It's not all that 10 or 15 percent of people of turnover are lousy at the job and are dismissed. Many of them actually go on to other administrative positions. It's all kind of (inaudible).

BRIAN FELL: That is true. That does happen. They move up to become an assistant principals or principals.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Any of our ADs that we hire are actually very, very talented and they actually go up the ladder.

BRIAN FELL: Absolutely in agreement with that, yes, sir.

REP. D'AGOSTINO: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. I'm glad to hear that last point is clarified. As I read lines 27 to 42 of this particular, never mind, no one's listening. Okay, thank you very much, sir.

I just ask Members of the Committee to re-read the bill because that is, I think, the duties that are outlined in there make a lot of sense.

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Any other questions? Thank you very much.

BRIAN FELL: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Lucy Nolan, followed by Ray Favreau.

LUCY NOLAN: Good afternoon, Senator Stillman, --

SENATOR STILLMAN: Good afternoon.

LUCY NOLAN: == Members of the Education Committee. My name is Lucy Nolan. I'm the Executive Director of End Hunger, Connecticut, a statewide anti-hunger and food security organization.

I'm here today to speak on House Bill 6357 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR CONCERNING EDUCATION. There are three pieces to the bill that I'm concerned about, two in particular with the Healthy Food certification.

For those of you who helped pass the legislation, I want to thank you all and to say that this is legislation that 140 school districts in the state participate in. They certify as being Healthy Foods. They are not allowed to sell any kind of junk foods and for that they get 10 cents per meal reimbursed.

There's, in this legislation, under line 1470, you'll see that this legislation repeals that 10 cent per meal reimbursement. Connecticut is one of the few states in the country that actually doesn't pay a per meal reimbursement. It's a block grant, the Money for Meals, and whatever is there is what the school's food service gets.

So when this legislation was passed in 2006 it had been 26 years before that line item had been increased in the general fund. What was

SENATOR STILLMAN: Not that I know of. Not on the hearing today, although we do have a study within the bill you referenced, 876, so we will, there will be a hearing on that. Has that bill been heard? That bill has not been heard. It will probably be on our next public hearing agenda, so if you see it come around again just know you've already testified and we have your comments and we'll make sure it's referenced to the appropriate bill.

TIM MULCAHEY: Very good. Thank you for your time.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. Thank you. Any questions for the gentleman? Thank you, sir.

TIM MULCAHEY: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: For purpose of the Committee Members, we will be hearing this issue again for those folks who have not gotten here to testify. Dr. Karissa Niehoff, to be followed by Galit Sharma and then Bill Phillips. Welcome.

DR. KARISSA NIEHOFF: Good afternoon, Senator Stillman and esteemed Members of the Committee, and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I'm Dr. Karissa Niehoff, Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Schools and the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference. Prior to that, I was a collegiate athlete. I've been a teacher, coach, AD, a principal and now I'm here as Executive Director so a number of these bills are near and dear to my heart and to the work of our association.

We provide professional development to about 1,000 member school principals and assistant principals, and we also govern interscholastic athletics and student activities.

HB6358
HB6359
SB877
HB6383
HB6385

We finally, we support the act concerning hiring standards for athletic directors and we also have concerns about the condition on athletic fields if the integrated pest management policy is not allowed at the high school level.

HB6383
HB6385

I'm happy to answer any questions, and again, thank you for your time.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. We appreciate it. Your last, I know you were trying to abide by the bell, so you're opposed to the bill on pesticides. Is that correct?

DR. KARISSA NIEHOFF: Well, our position as submitted is opposition to the bill because we believe that there needs to be more research done.

And while we're extremely concerned about the health and safety issues concerned with exposure to pesticides, we haven't yet either seen the research that directly links exposure in use in high schools.

I personally have witnessed and our coaches and athletic directors have witnessed, many student athletes injured when they've slipped on fields that have had grub and mold damage and the surface of the grass has just come loose under their feet. Career ending injuries.

And so we're very concerned about the immediate safety of kids but we also do support a transition to research proven practices that address both issues.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. Any questions? Yes, Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you so much, Madam Chair. How are you Dr. Niehoff? It's very good to see you.

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**EDUCATION
PART 2
358 - 723**

2013

TESTIMONY OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

Re: H.B. No. 6357, 6358, 6359, 6383, 6385. S.B. No. 877,

My name is Dr. Karissa Niehoff. I am the Executive Director of the CT Association of Schools (CAS) which includes the CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC). CAS is a non-profit association; our focus is school leadership. We provide an extensive range of professional development experiences and on-going support for school administrator aspirants, and those who are currently working as principals and assistant principals. The CIAC governs interscholastic athletics and student activities. CAS-CIAC membership includes approximately 900 public, parochial, charter and magnet schools serving students Pre-K-12 across the state. Today I am speaking on behalf of the nearly 1000 principals and assistant principals from our member schools regarding:

1. H.B. No. 6358 AN ACT UNLEASHING INNOVATION IN CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS.
2. H.B. No. 6359 AN ACT CONCERNING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM.
3. S.B. No. 877 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENTRANCE AGE FOR WHEN A CHILD MAY ENTER KINDERGARTEN.
4. H.B. No. 6383 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS.
5. H.B. No. 6385 (RAISED) AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF PESTICIDES AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1. H.B. No. 6358 AN ACT UNLEASHING INNOVATION IN CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS- CAS strongly supports granting school districts greater flexibility in the use of time and resources to improve student outcomes, including the waiver of Carnegie Units and extensive course requirements. We believe that policies and legislation should encourage personalized learning approaches in all schools through:

- Allowing students to earn credit based on demonstrating mastery in the classroom, as well as in extended learning opportunities, rather than seat time;
- Establishing appropriate funding formulas that allow for this transition to occur,
- Work with higher education to accept student credit earned in non-traditional formats.

CAS supports college and career standards for all students and all schools. Part of the strategy for achieving this lofty goal is to create greater relevance for students through the personalization of learning experiences. High school students can engage in valuable learning experiences through internships, summer programs, on-line courses and programs and after school programming. When these experiences demonstrate a high level of quality and relevance, schools and districts should have flexibility to grant credit for these learning experiences.

2. H.B. No. 6359 AN ACT CONCERNING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM- We believe that this bill is a tremendous step forward in improving education and services for children and families. Establishing an Office of Early Childhood will help to guide the collaboration of agencies so that programs will be implemented with greater quality and effectiveness. CAS considers the childhood years to be birth through age eight. Therefore, ongoing, intentional planning will be needed to make sure that birth to five efforts remain meaningfully connected to K-3 efforts. The Office of Early Childhood and pre-K-12 education should work collaboratively and in earnest to provide a continuum of services from birth through young adulthood.

3. S.B. No. 877 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENTRANCE AGE FOR WHEN A CHILD MAY ENTER KINDERGARTEN- CAS strongly supports the transition to an entrance age of five by the October 1 birth date and the tighter restrictions applied to starting children at age seven.

4. H.B. No. 6383 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS- CAS as the governing body for interscholastic athletics, strongly supports this bill. The role and responsibilities of athletic directors are very complex. They ensure compliance with CIAC rules and regulations; coordinate team schedules, transportation, officials; supervise and evaluate coaches, and monitor their requirements; adhere to the NCAA recruiting standards, maintain equipment and facilities to make sure they are safe for athletic play. Most importantly, they oversee the

implementation of policies and practices to keep kids safe. These are huge liability issues for schools and districts. A person in such a position should have the appropriate preparation for the job and likewise certification. The CIAC does not support the idea that athletic directors should supervise *intramural* activities, as mentioned in the bill, only interscholastic activities.

S. H.B. No. 6385 (RAISED) AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF PESTICIDES AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS- CAS-CIAC is opposed to this bill for a number of reasons, and they have nothing to do with cosmetics. The language in the bill emphasizes health and safety; banning the appropriate use of pesticides on fields can actually put student health and safety at risk. If grubs are not controlled the field surface becomes loose. Students can easily lose footing, twist ankles and knees, and easily sustain permanent injury. Many "organic" pesticides are actually more harmful than "unorganic" and they are extremely expensive. "Emergency" treatment is not maintenance. The proposed bill is not grounded in proven research about health and safety; if it were, we would certainly support it.

CAS-CIAC applauds the efforts of Governor Malloy, the Legislature, the State Department of Education and other government leaders to advance initiatives that improve education and protect the health and safety of our children. That concludes my testimony. Thank you for your consideration.



Amity Regional School District #5
Athletic Department

25 NEWTON ROAD, WOODBRIDGE, CONNECTICUT 06525
TEL (203) 397-4839 • FAX (203) 397-6232



Spartans

PAUL D. MENGOLD, CAA
DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

February 15, 2013

Supportive Testimony Regarding
House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Paul Mengold and I am currently the Director of Athletics for the Amity Regional School District serving the towns of Woodbridge, Orange and Bethany. My school system offers a comprehensive athletic program for 1 regional high school and 2 regional middle schools that offer 29 varsity athletic programs with 105 coaches and services over 1,700 high school students and more than 800 middle school students. The administration and success of this entire program is my primary responsibility. Having said that, I have been an athletic director for more than 29 years and during that time my job has been tremendously impacted by significant legislation and as a result the role of the athletic director has increased considerably. The athletic director has to insure that every coach in their program possesses a coaching permit required by law and that those permits are maintained by ongoing CEU's. Most athletic directors attend specific professional development training in order to provide those CEU's to their own staff at no cost. In 2010 legislation required education of coaches specific to concussions and the recognition of such injuries. In 2005 legislation was enacted requiring ALL coaches be evaluated. Other issues such as hazing and bullying, harassment, unreasonable parents, and state association requirements, etc. have also increased the duties of the athletic director position. The main focus of the athletic director is to provide a safe and healthy environment for each and every student athlete. It is a travesty that the position of Athletic Director exists in every school in Connecticut that provides an athletic program and has so many state regulated mandates to deal with and yet there is absolutely no mention of the position in any state statute. Additionally, there has been much work nationally to define the position and its time that Connecticut does so as well.

Therefore, I would like to commend the education committee for initiating House Bill 6383 and urge them to support its passing. I would like to suggest when this law goes into effect a clause be added as to not negatively impact anyone currently serving in the Athletic Director position.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Mengold

Paul D. Mengold, CAA
Director of Athletics
Amity Regional School District

P-1511000497

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 16
BEACON FALLS AND PROSPECT

Woodland Regional High School

Arnold Frank, Ph.D.
Principal

Dana Mulligan
Assistant Principal

Brian Fell
Assistant Principal
Athletic Director

February 15, 2013

Testimony Regarding
House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Brian Fell and I am the Athletic Director at Woodland Regional High School in Beacon Falls, serving the towns of Prospect and Beacon Falls. I am also the President of the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD). I have been an Athletic Director for more than 20 years and I am writing this testimony in support of House Bill 6383. Defining the position of Athletic Director and setting standards for hiring individuals that serve in that role is long overdue as the landscape of our profession has changed tremendously. Student safety is our primary concern, particularly given the physical nature of our programs and the large number of spectators that attend our events. The responsibilities of the Athletic Director require strict adherence to safety protocols and legislative mandates. The Athletic Director must ensure that every coach in his/her program possesses a coaching permit required by law and that those permits are maintained by ongoing CEU's. Most Athletic Directors attend specific professional development training in order to provide those CEU's to their own staff at no cost. In 2005, legislation was enacted requiring all coaches be evaluated. In 2010, legislation passed that requires the ongoing education of coaches specific to concussions and the recognition of such injuries. Other issues such as hazing and bullying, harassment and the use of electronic and social media have also increased the duties of the Athletic Director position. In addition, each Athletic Director has to deal with a multitude of issues on a daily basis from parents, ranging from playing time complaints to disagreements with the decisions of coaches. Athletic Directors also must make continuous efforts to ensure that good sportsmanship and fair play are being learned and practiced by athletes, parents, coaches and spectators so that a safe and healthy environment exists for each and every student-athlete. The requirements placed upon the Athletic Director position are too many to list but I can assure you our plates are full and more is being asked of us each day. What is staggering is that in our profession we have a 15% turnover each year and nearly 70% of our membership has less than 5 years' experience. Yet there is no statutory language that defines what we do or even states this position exists.

Although I support the language written in House Bill 6383, I feel it is incomplete. We need to protect those individuals who have been hired before the implementation date and were credentialed under previous regulations. May I suggest the following be added to section 1(b) & 1(c):

"Any person who holds the appropriate credentials and serves in the position of Athletic Director prior to July 1, 2013 shall not be subject to the provisions of this section."

Sincerely,

Brian Fell

Brian Fell,
Athletic Director, Woodland Regional High School
President, Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, INC.

30 REALTY DRIVE - CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT 06410 - (203) 651-3921 FAX (203) 250-1345

February 15, 2013

Supportive Testimony Regarding:

House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Fred Balsamo, Executive Director for the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD), which represents the athletic directors in 184 high schools and 170 middle school athletic programs across the state.

The role and responsibilities of athletic directors are very complex. Ensuring compliance with CIAC rules and regulations, coordinating sport team schedules and transportation, supervising and evaluating coaches and ensuring their requirements are met, adhering to the NCAA recruiting standards for college bound athletes, monitoring equipment and facilities to make sure they are safe for athletic play, and ensuring that all of these needs are met to safeguard the well-being of the students are all part of the day-to-day duties of the athletic director. However, despite all these responsibilities, there is no mention of the position of "athletic director" in any of the state statutes.

Several years ago, the legislature defined "athletic coach", created coaching permit requirements and a permit renewal process, and mandated ongoing education, which includes maintaining first aid and CPR certification and taking concussion education. The legislature also created an evaluation process of coaches and termination hearing procedures, and further mandated education on hazing, bullying and harassment, blood borne pathogens, MRSA, and gender identity. It has even passed legislation on the use of organic fertilizers on school playing fields. The responsibility for implementing and monitoring all of these mandates very often falls upon the shoulders of the athletic director.

We commend the committee on recognizing the magnitude of Athletic Director position and applaud the language set forth in House Bill 6383 which will define "athletic director" and set standards as to the qualifications needed to hold this position. It will provide student safety and diminish liability exposure to schools districts. However, there is additional language that is needed to protect those individuals currently in the position who have been grandfather in previous years. They should be protected unless they decide to move to another district.

I would like to suggest the following be added to section 1(b) & 1(c):

"Any person who currently holds the appropriate credentials and serves in the position of Athletic director prior to July 1, 2013 shall not be subject to the provisions of this section unless they move to a new school district."

This additional wording will guarantee that no one would lose his/her position as a result of the legislation and insure there would not be any economic mandates or hardships for school systems.

Sincerely,

Fred Balsamo

Fred Balsamo, CMAA, Executive Director
Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

ELIZABETH REMIGINO-KNAPP, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Conard High School
110 Berkshire Road
West Hartford, CT 06107
(860) 521-1350 x7202

William H. Hall High School
975 North Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06117
(860) 232-4561 x1194

February 15, 2013

Testimony Regarding

House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Elizabeth Remigino-Knapp and I am the Athletic Director for the West Hartford School District, having served in the role for the past seventeen years. This testimony is written in support of the long overdue House Bill 6383 that defines the position of Athletic Director and sets new standards for hiring individuals that would serve in our role. The responsibilities of athletic directors have increased over the past decade including those that are defined by the physical nature of the sports we administrate as well as the subjective influence of social media and fan behavior. The physical nature of our sport dictates a major influence on student-athlete safety, from concussion prevention and treatment to crowd control. The athletic director is also a human resource manager who is required to ensure that coaches are certified according to current law as well as promotion of CEU programs within current legislation. As an athletic director I am also responsible for frequent interaction with parents about issues other than disagreement about coaching decisions such as hazing, bullying, harassment and the use of electronic and social media. Our daily concern of student-athlete safety is impacted by weather, facility maintenance and scheduling of travel. As an athletic director there is also a constant effort to ensure good sportsmanship and fair play are being taught and that a safe and healthy environment exists for all student-athletes.

While I support the majority of the language written in House Bill 6383 I feel it is incomplete since it does not address those of us who were hired under a previous set of standards. I believe that it would be in the best interests of all those impacted by the new standards that individuals should be exempt from the new standards due to our pre-existing conditions of employment. The addition of a grandfather clause would be a way to minimize the harmful effects of new standards by limiting its application in cases where it would do more harm than good.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Remigino-Knapp
Director of Athletics, West Hartford Public School

Waterford High School

Athletic Department

20 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385-2894

Donald Macrino
Principal

David Sousa
Athletic Director

February 15, 2013

Testimony Regarding

House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is David Sousa and I am the Athletic Director for Waterford High School in Waterford, Connecticut. I have been an Athletic Director for more than 14 years. I feel compelled to write this testimony in support of House Bill 6383, as it is a House Bill that should be implemented to enhance the position of the Athletic Director. The role and responsibilities of our position has changed tremendously and continues to change. The Athletic Director is required to insure that every coach who participates in the school's athletic program possess and maintain a coaching permit and ongoing CEUs, which are required by law. Athletic Directors attend specific professional development training, so they may provide those CEUs to their own coaches at no cost. In 2010, legislation passed that requires the ongoing education of requiring all coaches specific to concussions and the recognition of such injuries. In 2005, legislation was enacted requiring all coaches be evaluated. The primary goal of Athletic Director is to provide each student with the opportunity to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity that will foster physical skills, personal growth, a sense of worth and confidence, and a knowledge and understanding of the pleasures of sport and principles of fair play. Other issues such as hazing and bullying and the use of electronic and social media have also increased the responsibilities and duties of Athletic Director position. In addition, the Athletic Director hires coaches, schedules games, transportation and officials, as well as dealing with a number of complaints, on a daily basis, from parents who disagree with the decisions of coaches. The requirements placed upon the Athletic Director position are far too many to list and I can assure you our plates are full and each day more and more is asked of us. Yet there is no statutory language that defines what we do or even states that we even exist. It is not amazing to me that since I came to the Eastern Connecticut Conference of 19 schools, seven years ago, we have had 14 different changes of Athletic Directors.

As I support the language written in House Bill 6383, I feel strongly sections 1(b) & 1(c) be amended to read:

"Any person who holds the appropriate credentials and serves in the position of Athletic Director, prior to July 1, 2013, shall not be subject to the provisions of this section."

Sincerely,

David Sousa

David Sousa, Athletic Director
Waterford High School

c: Senator Andrea Stillman

THE CONNECTICUT HIGH SCHOOL COACHES ASSOCIATION



February 15, 2013

**Supportive Testimony Regarding
House Bill 6383 - AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS**

My name is John Fontana and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut High School Coaches Association, which services the coaches in Connecticut. The athletic directors in Connecticut have been tremendously impacted by significant legislation over the past few years and as a result the role of the athletic director has increased considerably. The athletic director has to insure that every coach in their program possesses a coaching permit required by law and that those permits are maintained by ongoing CEU's. Most athletic directors attend specific professional development training in order to provide those CEU's to their own staff at no cost. In 2010 legislation required education of coaches specific to concussions and the recognition of such injuries. In 2005 legislation was enacted requiring ALL coaches be evaluated. Other issues such as hazing and bullying, harassment and the use of electronic and social media have also increased the duties of the athletic director position. In addition to all this each athletic director has to deal with a deluge of parental complaints on a daily basis from most that have lost perspective as to why their child participates in sports. Athletic directors must provide ongoing efforts to insure that good sportsmanship and fair play are being learned and that a safe and healthy environment exists for each and every student athlete. The requirements placed upon the athletic position are too many to list but I can assure you their plates are full and more and more are asked of them each day.

Lastly, the position of athletic director has been identified as important member of the schools administrative team and upgraded on a national level. Fully accredited course work and an official certification program have helped define the position. Many of our Connecticut athletic directors complete this course work and recognize the importance and valuable assistance it provides them in doing their job.

Therefore, because this position has a direct impact on student safety it should not only be a mention in the state statutes but the qualifications should be set much higher than a mere coaching permit. Additionally, wording should be added grandfathering those individuals currently in their AD positions.

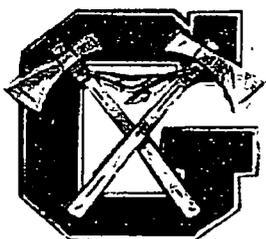
I would like to urge the committee to pass this important legislation which I wholeheartedly support.

Sincerely,

John Fontana

John Fontana, Executive Director
CHSCA

p:11/11/13



Glastonbury High School

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Trish Witkin, CMAA, Director of Athletics

February 15, 2013

Supportive Testimony Regarding

House Bill 6383- AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Trish Witkin and I am the Athletic Director of Glastonbury High School. I am the Past President of the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD) and currently am serving on the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrator Association (NIAAA) Board of Directors, representing New England, New York and New Jersey.

The responsibilities of athletic directors in education based athletics are very challenging and ever changing. The AD must ensure all members of their staff are in compliance State Department of Education certification requirements and meets the individual district requirements for hiring. We coordinate schedules, transportation, secure officials for all contests and verify all of our programs and coaches are in compliance with CIAC regulations. Athletic Directors are responsible for the supervision, evaluation and education of their coaches. We manage the uniform and equipment needs of our programs as well as oversee facilities to make sure they are safe for athletic play.

The Athletic Director works diligently to provide a quality education based experience for each student-athlete in their school. This is achieved through programming on the value of education based athletics, the importance of sportsmanship, student-leadership initiatives, anti-bullying/anti-hazing strategies and ensuring a safe and healthy environment exists for all participants. Other responsibilities include educating the staff and student athletes on the appropriate use of electronic and social media, importance of proper health and nutrition, monitoring academic and eligibility standards while also recognizing our student-athletes for their academic and athletic successes.

Based on the facts that Connecticut is experiencing a 15-20% turnover of its athletic director positions each year and of that group nearly half leave after their first year, and, 67% of the Athletic Directors in Connecticut have less than 5 years' experience, it is clear that these people are entering the profession unprepared and lack the qualifications needed for the rigors of this job.

The position of Athletic Director has been impacted tremendously by the before mentioned regulations and societal changes to the position. The qualifications of the athletic director should be elevated to a level that is reflective of the challenge and responsibility of the position. In addition, the very individual in the district responsible for the mandates passed through legislation should be mentioned in state statutes.

I respectfully request the committee support House Bill 6383. I ask that you consider adding the following clause to section 1(b) & 1(c) to protect those in positions under the previous regulations:

"Any person who holds the appropriate credentials and serves in the position of Athletic Director prior to July 1, 2013 shall not be subject to the provisions of this section unless they move to a new school district."

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Witkin

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