

February 22, 2016

R.B. No. 5249 Committee on Human Services- *An Act Establishing the Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board*

Good Afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Slossberg, Representative McGee, and distinguished Members of the Committee on Human Services,

My name is Karen Laugel. I am Chair of the Connecticut American Academy of Pediatrics (CT AAP) Traumatic Brain Injury-‘Return to Learn’ Initiative and a Board Member of the Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Advisory Board. I am also a pediatrician with thirty-five years of experience and currently the medical director of a children’s head injury practice. On behalf of the CT AAP and the children we serve, I am submitting **testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 5249, An Act Establishing the Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board.**

The CDC reports nearly a half million children aged fourteen and younger present yearly to our emergency departments with a traumatic brain injury (and 75% of these are diagnosed with concussions). The first school nurse report of concussions among Connecticut public school students shows the following results:

Connecticut Public School Survey 2014-2015

139/195 districts participated (71%)

535,900 total student enrollment

5,551 concussions reported

- 2,436 outside of school (44%)
- 1,820 during interscholastic athletics (33%)
- 387 during PE class (7%)
- 267 during school recess (5%)

Data presented at a CT SDE meeting, LOB, February 4, 2016

Note that in this 20014-2015 Connecticut Public School Survey, 45 % of the children sustained head injuries in interscholastic athletics, gym, or recess; and 44% of the children sustained head injuries outside of school. The demographics, nature or cause of injury, injury locale, severity, or

outcome have not been identified. Yet this level of comprehensive data will be crucial to successful problem solving.

The Connecticut TBI Advisory Board has the volunteers and the expertise to help identify the various causes of TBI, direct education and injury prevention, assess current services and outcomes, and assist with the establishment of a comprehensive TBI tracking system. The Connecticut TBI Advisory Board also enables TBI survivors and their family members to work together with professionals from the medical and educational communities, and the public and private sectors, thereby empowering the injured to help themselves.

I urge you to support this admirable team effort on behalf of Connecticut's citizens with TBI, and **'vote yes' to R.B. No. 5249, *An Act Establishing the Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board.***

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen Laugel, MD, FAAP
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Assistant Clinical Professor, Quinnipiac University School of Medicine
Board Member, CT TBI Advisory Board