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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 6561**

#### ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF YOUTH AND INTRAMURAL AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETES.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill establishes a 14-member task force to study injury prevention practices and safety protocols in youth sports leagues and intramural and interscholastic athletic programs.

The bill requires the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the Children's Committee by January 1, 2025, except those related to the use of protective neck guards in ice hockey must be reported by January 1, 2024. The task force terminates on the date that it submits its final report or January 1, 2025, whichever is later.

The bill also allows any privately operated youth athletic program to adopt the task force's recommendations in developing its injury prevention practices and safety protocols.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon passage, except the provision that allows youth athletic programs to adopt the task force's recommendations is effective January 1, 2024.

#### **INJURY PREVENTION PRACTICES AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS TASK FORCE**

##### ***Purpose***

The task force must analyze:

1. the efficacy and safety of using protective neck guards in ice hockey;
2. information on cardiac health and youth athletes, to determine whether and what type of cardiac testing should be required for

- participation in all or certain leagues or programs;
3. the effects of synthetic turf, crumb rubber, and pesticides on the health of youth athletes, including rates of cancer and other chronic or acute illnesses attributable to these substances, to identify safe and unsafe playing field conditions for youth athletes; and
  4. best practices for injury prevention and safety protocols and compare them to existing practices across the state to identify areas for improvement.

It must also make recommendations to implement a state-wide system of injury prevention practices and safety protocol review, including requirements that:

1. leagues and programs make their injury prevention practices and safety protocols public (including any amendments), and report them to the Department of Public Health, and
2. the public health commissioner, or their designee, meet annually with representatives of youth sports leagues and intramural and interscholastic athletic programs to discuss best practices for injury prevention and safety protocols.

### ***Membership and Appointments***

The task force's 14 members must be appointed as follows:

1. two by the House speaker, one each with expertise in sports medicine and neuroscience;
2. two by the Senate president pro tempore, one with expertise in sports psychology and one municipal youth sports league representative;
3. two by the House majority leader, one each with expertise in cardiology and environmental health;
4. two by the Senate majority leader, one who is a representative of

a nonprofit governing body for interscholastic athletic activities and another who represents a state-wide association of athletic trainers;

5. two appointed by the House minority leader, one who represents a state-wide association of athletic directors and another who is an orthopedics expert;
6. two by the Senate minority leader, one who is a legislator and another who represents a state-wide association of independent schools; and
7. the Education and Public Health commissioners, or their designees.

Initial appointments must be made within 30 days after the bill becomes effective and the appointing authority must fill any vacancies.

The House speaker and the Senate president must select a chairperson from among the task force's members, who must schedule the first meeting within 60 days after the bill's effective date.

The Children Committee's administrative staff must serve as the task force's administrative staff.

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 0 (02/28/2023)