



House of Representatives

File No. 804

General Assembly

January Session, 2023

(Reprint of File No. 53)

Substitute House Bill No. 6561
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 19, 2023

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

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force
2 to study injury prevention practices and safety protocols in youth sports
3 leagues and intramural and interscholastic athletic programs. The task
4 force shall (1) analyze (A) the efficacy and safety of the use of protective
5 neck guards in ice hockey, (B) information concerning cardiac health
6 and youth athletes, to determine whether and what type of cardiac
7 testing should be required for participation in all or certain leagues or
8 programs, (C) the effects of synthetic turf, crumb rubber and pesticides
9 on the health of youth athletes, including, but not limited to, rates of
10 cancer and other chronic or acute illnesses attributable to such
11 substances, in order to identify safe and unsafe playing field conditions
12 for youth athletes, and (D) best practices for injury prevention and
13 safety protocols and compare such best practices to existing practices
14 across the state in order to identify areas for improvement; and (2) make

15 recommendations for the implementation of a state-wide system of
16 injury prevention practices and safety protocol review, including, but
17 not limited to, a requirement that such leagues and programs make
18 public their injury prevention practices and safety protocols.

19 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

20 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
21 one of whom has expertise in pediatric sports medicine and one of
22 whom has expertise in pediatric neuroscience;

23 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
24 whom is a representative of a nonprofit organization that serves as a
25 governing body for interscholastic athletic activities and one of whom
26 is a representative of a municipal parks and recreation department that
27 is a member of a state-wide parks and recreation association;

28 (3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of
29 Representatives, one of whom has expertise in pediatric cardiology and
30 one of whom has expertise in environmental health;

31 (4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom
32 is a medical professional with expertise in treating pediatric patients
33 with sports injuries and one of whom is a representative of a state-wide
34 association of athletic trainers;

35 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of
36 Representatives, one of whom is a representative of a state-wide
37 association of athletic directors and one of whom has expertise in
38 pediatric orthopedics;

39 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom
40 is a member of the General Assembly and one of whom is a
41 representative of a state-wide association of independent schools;

42 (7) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's
43 designee; and

44 (8) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee.

45 (c) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later
46 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall
47 be filled by the appointing authority.

48 (d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
49 pro tempore of the Senate shall each appoint a cochairperson from
50 among the members of the task force. Such cochairpersons shall jointly
51 schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later
52 than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

53 (e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
54 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children
55 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

56 (f) Not later than January 1, 2024, the task force shall submit a report
57 on its findings and recommendations concerning subparagraph (A) of
58 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section to the joint standing
59 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
60 relating to children, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a
61 of the general statutes.

62 (g) Not later than January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the task
63 force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations
64 concerning subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of
65 subsection (a) of this section and subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this
66 section to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
67 cognizance of matters relating to children, in accordance with the
68 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

69 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2024*) Any youth athletic program
70 operated by a private entity may adopt the recommendations of the task
71 force to study injury prevention practices and safety protocols in youth
72 sports leagues and intramural and interscholastic athletic programs
73 established pursuant to section 1 of this act in developing such
74 program's injury prevention practices and safety protocols.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>January 1, 2024</i>	New section

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill establishes a task force to study injury prevention practices and safety protocols in youth sports resulting in no fiscal impact to the state because the task force has the expertise to carry out the requirements of the bill.

House "A" makes various technical changes to the task force resulting in no fiscal impact to the state.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6561 (as amended by House "A")******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 annually report its findings and recommendations to the Children's Committee starting 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 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.

*House Amendment "A" makes changes to the membership and reporting requirements of the taskforce the underlying bill creates. Specifically, it (1) makes the task force report to the Children's Committee an annual requirement; (2) specifies that the medical expertise required of some of the task force members must be further specialized in pediatrics; and (3) generally substitutes the Senate president pro tempore and the Senate majority leader appointees under the bill (i.e., a sports psychology expert and a municipal youth sports league representative) with those shown below. It also eliminates the requirement that the task force recommendations for a state-wide system of injury prevention include leagues and programs reporting

injuries to the Department of Public Health and meeting annually with the commissioner.

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 the leagues and programs make their injury prevention practices and safety protocols public.

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 pediatric

- sports medicine and pediatric neuroscience;
2. two by the Senate president pro tempore, a representative of a nonprofit organization that serves as a governing body for interscholastic athletic activities and a representative of a municipal parks and recreation department that is a member of a state-wide parks and recreation association;
 3. two by the House majority leader, one each with expertise in pediatric cardiology and environmental health;
 4. two by the Senate majority leader, one who is a medical professional with expertise in treating pediatric patients with sports injuries 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 a pediatric 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 each appoint a chairperson from among the task force's members, who must jointly 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)