



## **Introduction of the Athletic Concussion Protection Act of 2010 District of Columbia**

September 20, 2010

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **Summary of Bill**

District of Columbia Councilmember Phil Mendelson (At Large) is introducing a bill that would require a youth or disabled athlete to be removed from practice or play following a suspected concussion and only allowed to return after written clearance by a licensed health care provider experienced in the evaluation and management of concussions. This bill would also direct the District's Department of Health, Board of Education, Public Charter School Board and Department of Recreation to develop a concussion awareness and education program for coaches, athletic trainers, school personnel, athletes, parents and guardians. On an annual basis, the athlete and the parent or guardian will be required to sign a statement acknowledging receipt of the concussion information sheet before the athlete is allowed to participate. All coaches and athletic trainers will also be required to verify that they have received concussion education.

#### **Importance of Protecting Students And The Disabled Against Concussions**

According to recent research, concussions occur frequently in student-athletes, with 400,000 known occurrences at the high school level from 2005 to 2008. The functional effects of a concussion on the student-athlete are wide ranging, affecting their thinking and learning, as well as their social and emotional functioning. In addition, high school athletes who sustain a concussion are three times more likely to sustain a second concussion. Lack of proper diagnosis and management of a concussion may result in serious long-term consequences, or risk of coma or death. Student-athletes, parents, and coaches must be educated about these injuries to reduce the likelihood that student-athletes suffer the long-term effects associated with concussions that are not properly diagnosed.

#### **States Enacting Similar Legislation**

This bill is modeled after the Zackery Lystedt Law, enacted in the State of Washington in 2009. The law – named after a student who was permanently disabled following a traumatic brain injury suffered while playing football at his junior high school – has since been passed in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island and Virginia.

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## **About Stakeholder Organizations**

*Brain Injury Association of DC:* The Brain Injury Association of DC (BIADC) was founded in 2007, by a group of individuals dedicated to the improvement of the lives of persons impacted by brain injury. The founding board of directors represents persons with brain injuries, family members, professionals in the medical and rehabilitation fields, and individuals from the education and legal communities. All members of the board have had their lives affected in some way by brain injury, either through personal experience or their professions, and have a desire to help others also affected by brain injury within the Washington, D.C. community. BIADC has placed special emphasis on education and protective measures related to brain injuries in student athletes, and has led the advocacy for the D.C. Athletic Concussion Protection Act of 2010. BIADC is an affiliate of the national Brain Injury Association of America.

*Children's National Medical Center:* Children's National Medical Center, a 283 bed not-for-profit academic medical center located at 111 Michigan Avenue, N.W., has provided hope to sick children and their families throughout the Washington metropolitan region for more than 140 years. With Children's Hospital, seven primary care facilities, one outpatient center, two facilities providing specialty care services, and two pediatric practices located in the District of Columbia, Children's National is proud to provide convenient, high quality pediatric primary and specialty care to the District's children and families. The Safe Concussion Outcome, Recovery & Education (SCORE) Program at Children's National Medical Center evaluates, monitors, and manages the care of children and adolescents with concussions. The SCORE program is the only program in the greater Washington metropolitan region that specializes in the evaluation and management of concussions in children.

*National Football League and The Washington Redskins:* The National Football League and the Washington Redskins support concussion education and awareness to protect athletes of all sports. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has urged all states to enact legislation similar to the bill being introduced in Washington D.C. The Washington Redskins have held concussion education seminars for high school coaches across the region.

### **For Further Information**

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#### On the web:

[www.biadc.org](http://www.biadc.org)  
[www.childrensnational.org](http://www.childrensnational.org)