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SENATE MEMORIAL 97

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2013

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP CONSISTING OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN STUDENT ATHLETICS AND YOUTH SPORTS ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS PROFESSIONALS WHO TREAT YOUTH SPORTS-RELATED INJURIES, TO STUDY AND EVALUATE THE CONCEPT AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF CREATING A YOUTH SPORTS COMMISSION IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, thousands of New Mexico's young people, including student athletes and youth sports participants, as well as their parents and other family members, participate and are involved in a vast array of organized sports and athletic activities throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, preserving the popularity and participation in student athletics and youth sports builds strong community

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1 connections and benefits the young people involved, both
2 physically and socially, by increasing their levels of physical
3 activity and social interaction; and

4 WHEREAS, area hospitals have indicated a rise in the
5 treatment of young athletes for injuries sustained as a
6 consequence of sports-related activities; and

7 WHEREAS, a survey and review of the procedures and
8 protocols currently in place in New Mexico's student athletics
9 programs and youth sports activities, in conjunction with the
10 development of a database for the information collected, could
11 help in efforts to find ways to make student athletics and
12 youth sports activities safer for young participants; and

13 WHEREAS, the unfortunate recent news reports regarding
14 alleged abuses of student athletes and youth sports
15 participants have brought public awareness of the vital need to
16 protect student athletes and youth sports participants; and

17 WHEREAS, student athletes and youth sports participants
18 are under the instruction and supervision of numerous coaches,
19 volunteers and other individuals, the vast majority of whom
20 donate their time and talents in a manner that elevates the
21 experiences of young athletes participating in student
22 athletics and youth sports activities; and

23 WHEREAS, no student athlete or youth sports participant
24 should ever be subjected to verbal, physical or sexual abuse;
25 and

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1 WHEREAS, student athletes and youth sports participants
2 should have access to a proper channel for reporting
3 inappropriate behaviors or contact by persons involved in
4 student athletics and youth sports activities; and

5 WHEREAS, developing a reporting mechanism for student
6 athletes and youth sports participants to report instances of
7 abuse is critically important in protecting student athletes
8 and youth sports participants;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
10 OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families department
11 and the department of health be requested to convene a working
12 group to study and evaluate the concept and potential benefits
13 of creating a youth sports commission in New Mexico; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, along with representatives
15 from the children, youth and families department and the
16 department of health, the working group should be composed of
17 one or more representatives from the:

- 18 A. university of New Mexico health sciences center;
- 19 B. New Mexico medical society;
- 20 C. New Mexico pediatric society;
- 21 D. New Mexico activities association;
- 22 E. young America football league;
- 23 F. young America cheerleading;
- 24 G. American youth soccer association;
- 25 H. youth baseball little league association; and

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1 I. other groups involved with student athletics and
2 youth sports activities, including junior wrestling, boxing and
3 swimming as well as other sports activities deemed appropriate
4 to be represented; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be asked to
6 provide guidance and recommendations for adoption by student
7 athletics programs and youth sports activities regarding a
8 process to utilize background checks, acquire proper insurance,
9 adopt codes of conduct and implement coach and volunteer
10 training processes focused on enhancing youth sports; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be asked to
12 collaborate with other appropriate groups or individuals to
13 share resources, conduct and provide research and make
14 recommendations regarding the concept and potential benefits of
15 creating a youth sports commission in New Mexico; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group present its
17 findings and recommendations to the interim legislative health
18 and human services committee no later than November 1, 2013,
19 with a focus on determining whether a New Mexico youth sports
20 commission would benefit youth sports and athletics in the
21 state; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
23 transmitted to the secretary of children, youth and families,
24 the secretary of health and the chair and vice chair of the
25 interim legislative health and human services committee.

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