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April 2, 2013

Re: Concussion Management and SB 721

As a physician specializing in sports medicine at OHSU, I am daily on the front line of concussion care of student athletes and non-athletes as well as adults involved in a variety of activities. I often see 10 concussion patients a day, many who played through concussions and have had prolonged and serious effects as a result. Besides directing the OHSU Concussion Program, I am a member of the OSAA Medical Advisory Committee and Co-Chair of the Oregon Concussion Awareness and Management Program. I promote sports and physical activity as a means to be healthy and happy in life but unfortunately injury is a common occurrence in sports and concussions are some of the most debilitating of all sports injuries. We definitely want to do our best to accurately recognize and manage concussions on the field, in the classroom, and in the medical office.

Fortunately, Oregon has been a pioneer in developing state-wide protocols and programs to manage concussions through collaborations of the OSAA, the Department of Education, the Center for Brain Injury Research and Training, the Brain Injury Association of Oregon, the Oregon Athletic Trainers Society and a variety of other groups. We also established three medical referral and consultation centers for concussion at OHSU in Portland, The Center in Bend, and Slocum Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine in Eugene to provide regional support for patients and medical providers to assist with concussion care. These collaborating organizations formed the Oregon Concussion Awareness and Management Program in 2008 and worked with the Oregon Legislature to help create the first concussion law in 2009 called Max' Law.

This law has been very successful in establishing a uniform protocol for concussion management in Oregon schools. The OSAA, in collaboration with OCAMP and other organizations, has been very proactive in promoting educational programs and helping to provide resources for all schools to meet the requirements of Max's Law: no same day return to play, medical clearance before return to play, and yearly coaches education. Although this has been largely successful, we realize that there is a gap in knowledge, recognition and management of concussion in non-school sport activities. Because of this, we feel that a parallel law to Max's Law oriented towards club and other non-school sporting teams is necessary to standardize protocols and to improve the overall recognition and management of concussions across the state.

The key elements of such a new law would direct clubs to develop concussion educational and management programs centered on coaches implementing these plans. Educational programs would be oriented towards coaches, referees,

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administrators, parents and athletes. Although referees may be involved in identifying signs or symptoms for potential concussions and removing the athletes from the field of play for further evaluation, coaches would have the main duty of removing potentially concussed athletes from the field and restricting them from return to play until they have appropriate written medical clearance for return to play. Certified athletic trainers currently play a vital role in this process as one of the most knowledgeable groups of professionals regarding concussions in the state but are only involved in a limited number of club sporting activities and should not be included in this bill.

Given the relative high numbers of participation in club sports across the state, it is vitally important that these teams be educated about current concussion recognition and management and be required to adhere to well recognized guidelines as outlined in Max's Law which were previously limited to school sports. Fortunately, free educational programs are currently available on the web including at the OCAMP website( [www.ocamp.org](http://www.ocamp.org) ) with a validated program called Brain 101: The Concussion Playbook or with other great programs at the OSAA website (<http://www.osaa.org/healthandsafety/concussion.asp> ) or from the CDC.

In summary, I am in favor of a new law which expands the concepts of Max's Law to club and other non- school sports. I support a version of SB721 that focuses on the coach's role for concussion recognition and exclusion of players from play until players are medically cleared, with referee's role primarily focused on recognition and removal of impaired players. I also agree with implementing education for coaches, referees, parents and athletes and I agree with omitting any mention of athletic trainers from this legislation.

I thank you for your support in promoting consistent and effective state- of- the - art concussion management in Oregon.

Sincerely,



Jim Chesnutt M.D.

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April 1, 2013

RE: SB 721

On behalf of the OHSU Concussion Program and OHSU Government Affairs, we are writing to give our endorsement of the SB 721 as amended in -1 and without the amendments -3 that include athletic trainers. We believe that an additional law that applies the same rules as Max's Law to non-school sports is necessary to bring consistency to concussion management in sports in the state of Oregon. Oregon has been a leader in creating innovative programs around concussion management and this new bill is a positive step towards improving the consistency of concussion management across the state.

Sincerely,

Jim Chesnutt M.D.

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