

05/18/15

To: House Health Care Committee

From: The Oregon Athletic Trainers' Society

RE: SB521

The Oregon Athletic Trainers' Society (OATS) strives to enhance the quality of health care provided by certified athletic trainers and to advance the profession of Athletic Training in the state of Oregon.

OATS strongly supports SB521. Oregon has been a leader in insuring the safety of our youth, being one of the first states in the country to pass concussion legislation. "Max's Law" (ORS 336.485) had a tremendously positive impact on concussion awareness, education, and improved quality of health care for student athletes participating in school sponsored activities, since it went into effect.

In 2013, the legislature built upon the infrastructure put in place by "Max's Law" when they passed "Jena's Law" (ORS 417.875) which extended the same quality care standards to students participating in non-school activities. Unfortunately, there have been some unintended consequences due to a slight difference in the language between the two bills that has led to students at public schools and private school being treated differently even under the same circumstances.

If an athletic trainer determined that a student had not suffered a concussion he or she could return a public school student back to their competition or activity, while students from a private school, under the same circumstances, could not be allowed to return until they obtained a medical release. Not only could this potentially create an unfair field of play, it could have a negative impact on the students' experiences and result in missed opportunities.

The health and well being of students is the primary focus for athletic trainers in schools, clubs, and camp settings. This bill increases the ability of athletic trainers to provide consistent, quality, appropriate care in all settings.

Thank you,

Sam Johnson, PhD, ATC, CSCS
Oregon Athletic Trainers' Society
President