

Chair Lively, vice-chairs McIntire and Ruiz, for the record my name is Janelle Bynum, and I am the State Representative for House District 39.

As a proud football and basketball mom I've seen how sports can bring communities together and teach young athletes discipline, comradery, and sacrifice. At times though, the baser instincts of crowds and group think can take over and turn what is a refuge for many of our youth into a hostile and derisive environment. This is especially true in collegiate athletics where fans often fail to realize that the players they are cheering for or jeering against are barely old enough to vote.

House Bill 2472 places responsibility on Universities to develop basic reporting systems and staff training to respond to derogatory and inappropriate behavioral at interscholastic sporting events. The bill does not strive to create a strict regimen to regulate and take the fun out of college sports. Rather, we are setting a bare minimum that universities must comply with to respond to behavior that goes far outside the bounds of reasonable spectatorship.

I've sponsored previous legislation requiring Oregon high schools to meet many of the same standards addressed in this bill. While our collegiate sports at times take on the appearance of professionalism with the large stadiums and sponsorships, the fact remains that these athletes are still young developing adolescences. Events such as those that occurred last season at the Oregon vs BYU football game exemplify the type of behavior that creates hostile environments not fit for families hoping to enjoy a weekend day watching their favorite team.

As the proud mother of an Oregon Duck football player, I appreciate how college sports can cultivate great leaders and teach them skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives. However, I've also heard horror stories from players, coaches, and staff about out-of-control behavior from student sections and fans that provides nothing productive. Anyone who knows me knows I am a competitive person, but interscholastic competition must contemplate sportsmanship and basic decency. House Bill 2472 places a low bar that universities can easily meet to create a more hospitable sporting atmosphere for fans and athletes, without taking away from the entertainment and traditions of collegiate athletics.

Colleagues, for these reasons I ask you to support House Bill 2472.