



September 22, 2010

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman, House Education and Labor Committee
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Miller:

On behalf of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), a not-for-profit society of health care professionals serving physically active children and adults, I am writing to endorse the *Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act of 2010*. We support this act and its goals to establish requirements for prevention and treatment of concussions suffered from participation in school sports. The 33,000 members of NATA applaud your efforts to make physical activity, well-being, and athletic safety a focus for America's youth.

Athletic trainers practice the prevention, diagnosis, and intervention of emergency, acute, and chronic medical conditions involving impairment, functional limitations, and disabilities. Despite the importance of athletic trainers in the lives of the more than 7 million participants in high school sports, NATA currently estimates that only 42 percent of high schools have access to an athletic trainer through direct employment or clinic/hospital outreach. Access to athletic trainers is especially sparse in the Western and Midwestern portions of the U.S. In fact, NATA estimates that across the country the ratio of students to athletic trainers is 2,678 to 1.

Medical professionals who work with student athletes are well aware of the need for increased safety and awareness of head injuries and concussions. Concussion treatment and management is sporadic at the high school level and often neglects the athlete's role as a student. Only 42 percent of schools have access to an athletic trainer and only 53 percent meet the federally recommended nurse-to-student ratio. Further, the failure to recognize brain injuries or mismanagement of such injuries increases the vulnerability of a student athlete to successive injuries.

The *Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act of 2010* is essential to creating the needed guidelines for concussion treatment and prevention. This bill will increase student athlete access to medical professionals trained in concussion treatment and will build a safer environment for youth athletics.

We greatly appreciate your leadership in protecting the safety of student athletes. Please contact me or Amy L. Callender, Federal Legislative Manager (214-637-6282), if you need any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marjorie J. Albohm", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Marjorie J. Albohm, MS, ATC
President

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