



Durbin Introduces Bill to Improve Concussion Safety in Youth Sports

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WASHINGTON—U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today introduced the *Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act*, a bill that would strengthen elementary and secondary school procedures for preventing, identifying, and treating student-athletes who suffer concussions. The National Federation of State High School Associations estimates that about 140,000 students playing high school sports suffer concussions every year, though many go unreported. Durbin's bill requires states to adopt "when in doubt, sit it out" policies, which prevent student-athletes suspected of having sustained a concussion from returning to play the same day and, after that, only allowing them to return to play once they have been cleared by a qualified health care professional.

"The mentality about the long term dangers of concussions is different from decades ago. These are serious injuries that can't be addressed by walking it off," Durbin said. **"By adopting the 'when in doubt, sit it out' policy, we can increase student health and safety in youth sports."**

Durbin's legislation will also raise awareness about the danger of concussions among student athletes by directing states to develop concussion safety guidelines for public school districts. This includes posting educational information on school grounds and school websites about concussion symptoms and risks, and recommended responses for student athletes, parents, coaches, and school officials.

"USA Football recognizes the *Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act* as a vital step forward to advance the health and well-being of young athletes," said USA Football CEO Scott Hallenbeck. **"This bill places great priority on education, which is the foundation of smarter and better play. We commend Senator Durbin for his work on this important initiative."**

Additional organizations endorsing Durbin's *Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act* include: American Academy of Neurology; American College of

Sports Medicine; American Physical Therapy Association; Easterseals; National Football League (NFL); National Basketball Association (NBA); Major League Baseball (MLB); National Hockey League (NHL); National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA); National Council of Youth Sports; National Association of School Psychologists; National Association of Secondary School Principals; National Parent Teacher Association; U.S. Soccer Federation; USA Football; Sports & Fitness Industry Association; Safe Kids World Wide.