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BILL: Senate Bill 840  
TITLE: Youth Sports Programs – Concussion Risk and Management Training - Requirements  
DATE: February 28, 2018  
POSITION: OPPOSE  
COMMITTEE: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs  
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Senate Bill 840 requires the State Department of Education to educate, instead of provide awareness to coaches, school personnel, students, and the parents or guardians of students on certain matters relating to concussions and head injuries; requiring an individual who has completed concussion risk and management training or is a licensed health care provider to be responsible for on-site management of all concussion and head injuries during each practice and game, including certain decisions; etc.

PSSAM appreciates the intent of legislation. However, we must **oppose** Senate Bill 840.

Local superintendents place the highest priority on protecting our students. We are fully aware of the critical importance of concussion safety for our high school athletes. We have consistently recognized the seriousness of traumatic brain injuries. We work collaboratively to implement programs and policies to provide continual monitoring of the health and safety of our student athletes.

Local superintendents believe that the dissemination of the current programs and policies advised by the Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association provides for both awareness and education for all stakeholders to ensure that all students can safely participate in high school athletics. PSSAM is concerned that the change from “awareness” to “educate” could lead to ambiguity in the level of education delivered across the state to over 200,000 students and parents or guardians annually, access issues to technology needed for parents or guardians to be educated, and potential increased liability in the duty to educate as compared to provide awareness.

In addition, the regulations found in COMAR 13A.06.08, as well as the additional resources developed and implemented, continue to evolve with the changing medical information from concussion research. PSSAM is concerned that some of the language in Senate Bill 840, as it relates to high school interscholastic athletics, does not match the language found in COMAR 13A.06.08 and therefore may undermine previous legislative bills and the continued collaborative work of educational and medical professionals.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **opposes** Senate Bill 840 and urges an unfavorable committee report.