

ASSEMBLY, No. 5379

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 16, 2019

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman **JOHN F. MCKEON**

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Assemblyman **JOHN J. BURZICHELLI**

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes task force to examine issues and make recommendations concerning youth sports, including abusive coaching, confrontational parents, and bullying of players.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing a Youth Sports Task Force to examine various
2 issues associated with youth sports.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. a. There is established a Youth Sports Task Force for the
8 purpose of examining, evaluating, and making recommendations
9 regarding youth sports.

10 b. The task force shall consist of 13 members as follows:

11 (1) six members who each have a background in, or special
12 knowledge of, the legal, policy, educational, social, or
13 psychological aspects of bullying. These six members shall be
14 appointed as follows: two appointed by the Senate President; two
15 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and two
16 appointed by the Governor;

17 (2) four members of the public, to be appointed by the
18 Governor, including: the parent or guardian of a student-athlete who
19 participates in an interscholastic sports program; the parent or
20 guardian of an athlete who participates in youth sports events as
21 defined in section 1 of P.L.2002, c.74 (C.5:17-1); the parent or
22 guardian of an athlete who participates in youth sports activities
23 sponsored by a for-profit entity; and a youth who was a victim of
24 harassment, intimidation, or bullying while participating in youth
25 sports; and

26 (3) three coaches to be appointed by the Governor, including a
27 coach of an interscholastic sports program, a coach of youth sports
28 events, and a coach of youth sports activities sponsored by a for-
29 profit entity.

30 c. Appointments to the task force shall be made within 30 days
31 of the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the
32 task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original
33 appointments were made.

34 d. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation,
35 but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenditures incurred in the
36 performance of their duties as members of the task force within the
37 limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task
38 force for its purposes.

39
40 2. a. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable, but
41 no later than 30 days following the appointment of its members.
42 The task force shall choose a chairperson from among its members
43 and shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task
44 force.

45 b. The Department of Education shall provide such
46 stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants, and such
47 professional staff as the task force requires to carry out its work.
48 The task force also shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail

1 itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or
2 municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it
3 may require and as may be available for its purposes.

4
5 3. a. It shall be the duty of the task force to study and consider
6 issues in regard to youth sports including, but not limited to, the
7 following:

8 (1) protection for parents, guardians, and athletes from
9 unscrupulous business practices conducted by for-profit entities
10 sponsoring youth sports activities;

11 (2) financial oversight to strengthen the business practices of
12 youth sports team organizations, as defined in section 5 of
13 P.L.2010, c.94 (C.18A:40-41.5), and for-profit entities that sponsor
14 youth sports;

15 (3) training for coaches to recognize the signs and symptoms of
16 harassment, intimidation, and bullying;

17 (4) ways to acknowledge and promote youth sports as an
18 extension of the classroom;

19 (5) developing training workshops for parents and guardians to
20 recognize the signs and symptoms of harassment, intimidation,
21 bullying, and abusive coaching, and on proper spectator conduct;
22 and

23 (6) protection for sports officials from abusive behavior while
24 engaged in the performance of their duties.

25 b. The task force shall hold at least one public hearing during
26 the course of its work in order to receive public input on the issues
27 being studied by the task force.

28
29 4. The task force shall issue a final report of its findings and
30 recommendations to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant
31 to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than one
32 year after the task force organizes.

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34 5. This act shall take effect immediately, and the task force
35 shall expire 30 days after the issuance of its report.

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38 STATEMENT

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40 This bill establishes the Youth Sports Task Force. Under the bill,
41 the task force will consist of 13 members including six members
42 who each have a background in, or special knowledge of, the legal,
43 policy, educational, social, or psychological aspects of bullying. Of
44 these six members, two will be appointed by the Senate President,
45 two will be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and
46 two will be appointed by the Governor. The task force will also
47 consist of seven members of the public to be appointed by the
48 Governor, including the parents or guardians of athletes

1 participating on youth sports teams and a youth who was a victim of
2 harassment, intimidation, or bullying while participating on a youth
3 sports team.

4 The task force will study and consider issues of youth sports
5 including, but not limited to:

- 6 • protection for parents, guardians, and athletes from
7 unscrupulous business practices conducted by for-profit
8 entities sponsoring youth sports activities;
- 9 • financial oversight to strengthen the business practices of
10 youth sports team organizations and for-profit entities
11 sponsoring youth sports activities;
- 12 • training for coaches to recognize the signs and symptoms of
13 harassment, intimidation, and bullying;
- 14 • ways to acknowledge and promote youth sports as an
15 extension of the classroom;
- 16 • developing training workshops for parents and guardians to
17 recognize the signs and symptoms of harassment,
18 intimidation, bullying, and abusive coaching, and on proper
19 spectator conduct; and
- 20 • protection for sports officials from abusive behavior while
21 engaged in the performance of their duties.

22 The bill directs the task force to issue a final report of its
23 findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature
24 no later than one year after its organizational meeting. The task
25 force will expire 30 days after the submission of its final report.