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Testimony on Assembly Bill 343

Representative Keith Ripp
Assembly Committee on Education

I want to thank committee members for allowing me to present testimony today in favor of Assembly Bill 343.

Senator Farrow and I have authored this legislation to offer a fix to 2011 Wisconsin Act 179 (2011 Assembly Bill 259) which created standards and guidelines for participants of any youth athletic activity to submit a concussion and head injury information sheet. It requires that a public or private school submit the information sheet to a student to fill out for each athletic activity they participate in. The law also stipulates that no person may participate in the athletic activity unless he or she returns the signed information sheet and, if he or she is under the age of 19, includes a signature from his or her parent or guardian. In practice, this would require a three-season sport student to fill out the form three times in one year and require the school district to keep track of all three forms.

We have heard from coaches and athletic directors around the state who say that this requirement is redundant and unnecessary. They suggested it would be more appropriate to require that only one information sheet be filled out per student per year. This practice would ensure that students and parents get the necessary information they need on the reality of concussions and head injuries, but it also relieves some of the burden on the schools and families for doing so. This is a common sense fix to bring the law in line with what was intended last session.

Thank you members, I ask for your support and I would be more than happy to answer any questions.