

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 675
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Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Awareness about sports-related head injuries has been raised significantly over the last few years and much attention has been placed on the diagnosis and prevention of such injuries through medical analysis. Proper protective equipment is an important means of preventing injury, with football helmets being the first line of defense in preventing head injuries among football players. Many of the helmets used by Texas high school football players are used from one year to the next and are several years old. Currently, the University Interscholastic League does not have any rules regarding the age of a football helmet or how often it must be reconditioned.

H.B. 675 prohibits the use of helmets that are 16 years old or older in a school district's football program and requires helmets 10 years old or older to be reconditioned at least once every two years. The bill requires districts to keep documents indicating the dates a helmet was purchased and reconditioned.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the University Interscholastic League in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 675 amends the Education Code to prohibit a school district from using a football helmet that is 16 years old or older in the district's football program. The bill requires a school district to ensure that each football helmet used in the district's football program that is 10 years old or older is reconditioned at least once every two years. The bill requires a school district to maintain and make available to parents of students enrolled in the district documentation indicating the age of each football helmet used in the district's football program and the dates on which each helmet is reconditioned. The bill authorizes the University Interscholastic League to adopt rules, which must be approved by the commissioner of education in accordance with state law requiring the league to submit its rules and procedures to the commissioner for approval, necessary to implement the bill's provisions. The bill makes its provisions applicable beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.