

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 887
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Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Research shows that the accumulation of subconcussive hits to the head can have devastating long-term effects on the brain similar to the effects of multiple concussions. There is concern that head injuries are more prevalent in football than in any other sport and that much of the damage is asymptomatic. Given that current methods for identifying concussions rely heavily on the observation of symptoms, interested parties contend that the most efficient way to prevent the damage caused by accumulated subconcussive hits to the head is to allow the brain proper time to rest and that one way to achieve such rest is to limit the number of full-contact practices in which student athletes may participate. C.S.H.B. 887 seeks to allow high school and middle school football players time to heal from subconcussive hits by limiting the frequency of participation in full-contact drills.

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

C.S.H.B. 887 amends the Education Code to require the University Interscholastic League (UIL) to adopt a rule that prohibits a high school or middle school football team that participates in activities sponsored or sanctioned by the UIL from allowing a member of the team to participate in more than a total of one hour of full-contact drills per week. The bill excludes the following types of drills or simulations from the prohibition: a player running without opposition or resistance from another person or object; a player running with opposition or resistance from a bag, shield, or pad regardless of whether a person is holding the bag, shield, or pad; and a person running at full speed against another player until the time of contact, as long as the players remain on their feet and contact between the players is made above the waist. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 887 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and highlighted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute version of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 33,

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 33,

Education Code, is amended by adding Section 33.096 to read as follows:

Sec. 33.096. LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF FULL-CONTACT PRACTICES BY FOOTBALL TEAM.

No equivalent provision.

The league shall adopt a rule that prohibits a high school or middle school football team that participates in activities sponsored or sanctioned by the league from holding more than one full-contact practice per week.

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

Education Code, is amended by adding Section 33.096 to read as follows:

Sec. 33.096. LIMITATION ON PARTICIPATION IN FULL-CONTACT FOOTBALL TEAM DRILLS.

(a) In this section:

(1) "Full-contact drill" means a drill or live game simulation involving contact at game speed in which players execute full tackles or blocks at a competitive pace with the intent of forcing another player to the ground.

(2) "League" means the University Interscholastic League.

(b) The league shall adopt a rule that prohibits a high school or middle school football team that participates in activities sponsored or sanctioned by the league from allowing a member of the team to participate in more than a total of one hour of full-contact drills per week.

(c) Subsection (b) does not apply to the following types of drills or simulations:

(1) a player running without opposition or resistance from another person or object;

(2) a player running with opposition or resistance from a bag, shield, or pad regardless of whether a person is holding the bag, shield, or pad; and

(3) a player running at full speed against another player until the time of contact, as long as the players remain on their feet and contact between the players is made above the waist.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.