



Senate Industry Business and Labor Committee
SB 2060
January 11, 2021

Chairman Klein and Committee Members, I am Parag Kumar. I am a Pediatric Hospitalist in Bismarck and Chairman of the ND Medical Association Commission on Socio-Economics. I present this testimony on behalf of the North Dakota Medical Association. The North Dakota Medical Association is the professional membership organization for North Dakota physicians, residents, and medical students.

NDMA opposes Section 12 of SB 2060. Section 12 would allow a licensed chiropractor to perform a preparticipation evaluation for participation in sports.

Our members are concerned that many adolescent medical issues could be missed if the preparticipation physical is not conducted by a physician or other qualified medical provider.

A good preparticipation physical includes screening for heart disease and performing a cardiovascular exam, screening for neurologic, musculoskeletal and genetic disorders that may affect an athlete's ability to safely participate in sports. This is also a time to administer vaccines, screen for mental health disorders, evaluate for risk of concussion and address the unique concerns of athletes with special needs. For many young, healthy athletes, the only time they see their physicians is during a preparticipation evaluation. We have many examples of patients coming in for a preparticipation evaluation, only to discover that they are behind on vaccinations, suffering from severe depression, or have an unaddressed medical issue such as asthma. These issues can only be adequately addressed in the traditional medical setting.

The pandemic makes these issues even more important.

1. Due to the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in mental health issues for our population, including adolescents.

2. Due to potential cardiac complications of coronavirus, the American Academy of Pediatrics has published guidelines for more complex evaluation before return to play. Given the large rate of asymptomatic cases, consideration for whether this additional evaluation needs to be done must be given during all sports physicals this year, with understanding and ability to perform this evaluation, interpret the results, and provide appropriate recommendations for those who require it. Missing a cardiac complication in a youth returning to sports could be a fatal mistake.
3. Due to delay in seeking care associated with the pandemic, some North Dakota adolescents are behind in their immunizations. Chiropractors performing sports physicals will either lead to parents needing to make another visit for their child/adolescent to be immunized or children remaining under immunized. Neither of these options seems to be in the best interest of North Dakotan children and families.

Based on these concerns, we would propose an amendment that would remove Section 12 from SB 2060 and renumber the remaining sections.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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