

Connecticut Commission on
Women, Children *and* Seniors



**Testimony before the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
of the General Assembly
Submitted by the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors
February 7, 2017**

Re: HB 6870, An Act Protecting the Health and Safety of College Athletes

Senator Bye, and Senator Linares, and Representative Haddad, and distinguished members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors (CWCS) on the above referenced bills.

HB 6870, An Act Protecting the Health and Safety of College Athletes

Under its authorizing statute, the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors (CWCS) carries the responsibility to focus its efforts on the following quality of life results for all children in Connecticut: that they are (a) healthy, safe and achieve educational success; (b) free from poverty; and (c) free from discrimination. This same responsibility extends to them from birth to early adulthood, and for many includes the college years. HB 6870 is therefore of particular interest to CWCS and included in our agency mandate.

CWCS enthusiastically supports the intent of HB 6870, to protect the health and safety of college athletes. We also support the intention of HB 6870 to establish a commission for the purpose of athletic protection. The proposed activities of the commission would promote consistent use of best practices, which would improve health and safety quality of life outcomes for college athletes.

Further, the activities of the proposed commission for athletic protection are aligned to and would benefit from the active support of CWCS. The Commission on Children, a predecessor agency to CWCS, has been an active participant in the Task Force on Youth Concussion, and CWCS continues that work, including research on guidelines and best practices shown to reduce youth concussion rates. This is but one example of the support of child health outcomes that enables CWCS to provide research, coordination, and advice in promotion of athlete safety. For this reason, it is respectfully requested that the Committee consider inclusion of the Executive Director of CWCS in the membership of any proposed commission for athletic protection.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment today on these bills.