



OFFICE LOCATION

Ankin Law Office
162 W Grand Ave
Chicago, IL 60654

Tel: 312-346-8780 or 800-442-6546

Fax: 312-346-8781

PRACTICE AREAS

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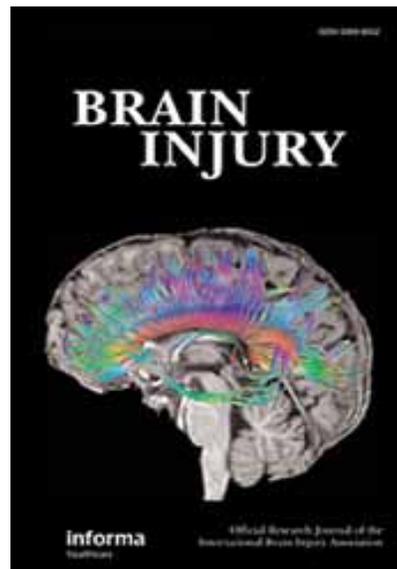
Personal Injury

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Congress Considering Passage of Concussion Treatment and Care Tools Act

9/21/2010



In a [prior post](#), we discussed traumatic brain injuries and how concussions, once described as “mild” traumatic brain injuries, are anything but. More and more medical research is showing that concussions are serious injuries with lasting effects.

The issue of the seriousness of concussions and the ramifications for athletes is becoming a hot topic. Both professional athletes and school-age athletes are at risk. For that reason, as explained in this [post](#) from Point of Law, Congress recently considered legislation intended to establish concussion management guidelines for school-aged children.

In early September, The Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee held a field hearing regarding the proposed “Concussion Treatment and Care Tools Act.” In the CRS summary, the Act is described as



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follows:

Amends the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to: (1) establish concussion management guidelines that address the prevention, identification, treatment, and management of concussions in school-aged children, including standards for student athletes to return to play after a concussion; and (2) convene a conference of medical, athletic, and educational stakeholders to establish such guidelines. Authorizes the Secretary to make grants to states for: (1) adopting, disseminating, and ensuring the implementation by schools of the guidelines; and (2) funding implementation by schools of computerized preseason baseline and post-injury neuropsychological testing for student athletes. Directs the Secretary to require states to utilize, to the extent practicable, applicable expertise and services offered by local chapters of national brain injury organizations.

The passage of this Act would be important for two reasons. First, it would help to educate the public about concussions and would dispel the myth that they are "mild injuries." Second, it would likewise serve to protect school-age children by establishing preventative guidelines, educational policies and standardized treatment procedures.

Concussions are serious injuries and this Act will help to highlight this fact and aid in the prevention and treatment of concussions in child athletes. Let's hope that our legislators in Congress have the wisdom to recognize the many benefits that this piece of legislation offers to the most vulnerable of our society: our children.