



US Congress Proposes Children's Sports Athletic Equipment Safety Act

On March 16, 2011 both houses of the US Congress introduced legislation (House Bill HR1127 and Senate Bill S601) proposing a *Children's Sports Athletic Equipment Safety Act*. The purpose of the act would be to encourage and ensure the use of safe helmets for football and other purposes.



Although the legislation is not in its final stage, once it is finalized and passed, it is expected to be enacted within nine months of that action.

Background

For many years, there have been voluntary standards in place enacted by the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) related to helmets. However, due to the increased public awareness of concussion incidents that have occurred, particularly related to football and youth helmets, legislation has been proposed to provide oversight on the industry.

Requirements

Both bills specifically address the risk of concussion that is missing from the voluntary industry safety standards for football helmets plus the following:

- Lack of a safety standard for youth football helmets worn by children, particularly those younger than 12 years old.
- Need for third-party testing and certification requirements for all youth football helmets (including reconditioned youth football helmets) used up to the age of eighteen.
- Providing a label with the date of manufacture on newly manufactured football helmets and date of reconditioned label for reconditioned helmets.
- Providing a warning label that cautions consumers that a football helmet's ability to protect the wearer can decline over time.
- Better Federal Trade Commission (FTC) enforcement for false or misleading claims with respect to athletic sporting activity goods to prevent helmet manufacturers and resellers misrepresenting concussion safety claims. Also, to prevent used helmet reconditioners from falsely claiming that their helmets have been certified and met voluntary industry safety standards.

Additional Information

View the proposed legislation:

- Link to HR1127: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr1127ih/pdf/BILLS-112hr1127ih.pdf>
- Link to S601: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112s601is/pdf/BILLS-112s601is.pdf>

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