

Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in support of House Bill 208.

On May 6th, 2019, my son Dustin was umpiring in Springfield, Ohio. I was sitting in front of my car, watching him. His little brother went off to the playground while Dustin did his job. Dustin was 17 years old and didn't have a driver's license so we normally stay and watch his far away games. I was talking with a friend on my phone when I heard Dustin raise his voice and say "You're out of here!" At the time I looked up and saw my son surrounded by coaches and a woman yelling and cursing at him. I had missed whatever this was about so I started walking fast to the field so I could get to him. By the time I got to him he was on the ground. I looked at the coach that pushed him and said "you just laid your hands on a 17 year old boy." He looked at me and disregarded what I said, continuing to curse at my son and now me. I called 9-1-1 and reported an assault to a minor. As we waited for the sheriff to arrive, they continued with threats and cursing. My son was sitting back in our car and I told him not to move. My youngest son was also put in the car. At this point, I still had no idea what this was all about.

Witnesses gave reports of what happened to my son to the sheriff's department. Parents were upset because nothing had been done in response to the actions of the coach and woman ejected. I was told the next afternoon that if I want to continue fighting for action, I would be thrown in jail. I have called a lawyer and am working on a civil suit against the woman and coach.

My husband is also a baseball umpire and I hear stories every night about parents and coaches getting out of hand at games. Dustin has his baseball and wrestling official license. I believe that all sports officials need protection. They should not fear for their safety while doing their jobs. I shouldn't have to worry about their safety at sporting events. Sports events should be fun and enjoyable. Fans, parents and coaches should be setting an example. I feel once there is a law to protection officials, maybe they will know that this behavior is not acceptable at sporting events. I will not stop fighting for House Bill 208.

Jaime Massie

Mother of Dustin Massie