

Good morning. Thank you for listening to my testimony on SB118.

On the evening of August 31, 2019, I was sitting at home and got a text from my husband that said "Waiting on Dayton PD. I got head butted intentionally by a Dunbar player, we canceled the game". I cannot fully explain the thoughts that went through my head reading that. I asked if he was okay and if I needed to come pick him up. Scott said he was okay and his crew was waiting with him until he was done with the police and could head home. You may be asking yourself why did he just text his wife? I believe it was because he could keep his emotions in check with just a text. Scott called when he was on his way home and his first words were honey, I was scared and he started crying. My husband, a Desert Storm combat veteran, had been scared and was now crying. He explained to me what had happened and said he felt defenseless and wasn't sure if the player's teammates would side with him and they would come after the officials or what. Thankfully the other players came between them and kept anything further from happening.

Scott had a headache when he got home, but was hopeful it would be gone when he got up the next morning. It wasn't, so he took a prescribed ibuprofen, but the headache was still there hours later. We decided it would be best for him to get checked out by a professional, make sure everything was essentially okay. The ER doctor ordered CT scans to be sure there were no bone fractures or a brain bleed. Thankfully all was okay there and he was able to walk away with a concussion, and medications. We actually had a family get together that evening, but he was only able to go, eat and then he returned home within half an hour. Not only was his head killing him, but talking about it and watching the video with family was bringing it all back.

After he came home and over the next few days, we discussed it more than we wanted to. He talked of quitting officiating all together. This man, who has missed countless family gatherings over the years, and spent so much time away from home was thinking of walking away all together because of the actions of one young man. Neither one of us slept well over the next few evenings between his bad dreams and my making sure he was okay. He is almost always doing something and sitting at home, limiting tv and phone time, taking things easy so his brain could heal were very hard for him.

Not only was he physically injured, but the emotional took its toll also. He had to relive it every time someone asked about it. He struggled with deciding to go back and because of this he was unable to work. He had been driving for Uber and Lyft since he lost his job in March, but he was not able to drive and never did go back because he didn't feel 100% confident taking passengers even when his headaches started getting better. To know he wasn't able to bring in any money was probably one of the hardest things for him. Between officiating and what he could have potentially made driving he lost out on probably \$2,500. Now, we are also facing medical bills. We had to get an insurance policy with a high deductible for while he was out of work since my employer doesn't offer insurance so we will probably be responsible for a couple thousand dollars in medical bills and prescriptions from the ER and follow up doctor visits. Add that to the already lost income and we're looking at losing more than he makes officiating football in a season.

He was finally able to return to football this past weekend and is controlling his headaches with ibuprofen but I still worry. I don't want him to have a setback. I feel like I now need to be at every game in case something happens. As a wife/family member of an official you know they could get hurt, but you never think it will happen in this matter. He accidentally got rolled up on by a player and sprained his MCL last season, but an injury like that is 'normal'. You don't expect someone to purposefully attempt to injure someone. I try to be supportive, especially because I know how much he loves football, and I am proud he is able to do Friday Night Lights but now I worry more. Watching the video makes me sick to my stomach.

After this happened, we started looking into what charges could possibly be filed. We found information on these bills trying to be passed. I strongly believe my husband's case should be charged as a felony with a deadly weapon. I also believe he should be charged as an adult even though he is 17. I personally believe that these officials should be given

the same protections that teachers, correction officers, fire fighters, etc. have in Ohio. Scott and his fellow officials are doing this for the love of the games, often times traveling quite far (we have gone 3 hours round trip) for little pay. We are very lucky and thankful that the player did not have more momentum on the headbutt and that Scott only received a concussion. It could have been SO much worse.

I understand this young man probably did it in the heat of the moment, but that is no excuse. I fully believe people should be held responsible for their actions. If Scott had laid a hand on a player I can only imagine the consequences. The young man will probably walk away with what is essentially a slap on the wrist when he could have potentially killed my husband. We are still waiting to see what charges will be filed as the detectives were waiting on his medical records before filing charges.

I (we) hope that legislation passes sooner rather than later to give officials the protection they need in the future. We understand that things will still happen, but maybe people will think twice if there are stiffer penalties, if they know there are consequences to their actions. Sports officials need protection. The verbal abuse they take on a daily/nightly basis from fans/parents/coaches and players is enough already, they shouldn't have to worry about being assaulted also. Thank you,

Angela Bistrek