



**House Higher Education Committee**  
**House Bill 356 Written Interested Party Testimony**  
**Ohio High School Athletic Association**  
**June 18, 2024**

Chairman Mathews, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Public Health Policy Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today regarding House Bill (HB) 356. My name is Kristin Ronai, associate executive director for the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA).

By way of introduction, the OHSAA is a private, not-for-profit, unincorporated association. Membership in the organization is completely voluntary, and we are currently made up of 818-member high schools and approximately 750-member 7/8 grade schools. 100% of Ohio's public school districts are members of the association, and approximately 20% of our membership is made up of chartered non-public schools. Our policies are approved by the membership as a whole and we are led by a governing board made up of individuals representing all segments of our membership demographic. The policy which brings us here today is our sports medicine physical requirements.

We appreciate the bill's sponsor, Representatives Carruthers, meeting with us regarding this bill and how it relates to the OHSAA's current policy. The OHSAA's sports medicine committee, named the Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine (JACSM), was established in 1958 by the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) to assist the member schools of the OHSAA to protect the health and safety of student athletes in the interscholastic athletics programs in Ohio's secondary schools. The JACSM is the longest serving sports medicine committee that works with state athletic associations in the United States.

Each year the JACSM meets quarterly to review a variety of issues, including a review of the athlete health physical form utilized by the majority of our students. We appreciate the bill's sponsor's willingness to make changes to the bill to allow athletes to continue utilizing this form as an option.

Our office, and our JACSM, is also in support of the agreed-to change in HB 356 to only require a health physical once per year, as opposed to before each sports season (fall, winter, spring) as under the "as-introduced" version.

As you are aware, student participation in activities such as playing on a sports team can serve to enhance their overall educational experience and promote their positive growth in becoming a responsible citizen. The provisions in HB 356 are aimed at ensuring students can safely participate in sports. The members of our association support that same goal.

Again, we appreciate Representative Carrathers working with us to align some of the bill's requirements with the recommendations by our office, by way of our JACSM and based on current practice. We believe the changes to the original version of the bill will improve the student experience while not undermining the original intent of bill.

This concludes my testimony. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Kristin Ronai  
OHSAA Associate Executive Director  
614-267-2502;132