



May 4, 2017

Hon. Florindo J. Fabrizio
Hon. Matthew E. Baker
The Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Health Committee:

The Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers' Society (PATS), representing licensed athletic trainers across the Commonwealth, are writing to the House General Assembly in support of the initiative of Rep. Dan Miller to introduce HB 1176 that would develop a concussion protocol for all police departments.

Athletic trainers provide prevention, diagnosis and intervention of emergency, acute and chronic medical conditions, including concussions. Athletic trainers work in varied settings but an emerging area is the industrial setting, which can include police departments. Athletic trainers have been on the front line of concussion diagnosis, management and prevention since before the recent spotlight was placed on this extremely serious and potentially detrimental injury. Education is by far the best prevention of long-term consequences of concussion. Understanding the symptoms and having protocols that remove a person from physical activity and potential re-injury can ultimately reduce further complications. The 5th international conference on concussion in sport was held in Berlin in October 2016. Even though the emphasis on this conference focused on sport, the information included in the consensus statement from medical experts around the world, translates to other activities including law enforcement. They state that “studies...have demonstrated...concussion is associated with changes in brain structure and function, which correlate with post-concussive symptoms and performance...” “As the ability to treat or reduce the effects of concussive injury after the event is an evolving science, education...is a mainstay of progress... administrators, (staff), and healthcare providers must be educated regarding the detection of (concussion), its clinical features, assessment techniques and principles of safe return to (activity)”. (McCrary P, et al. *Br J Sports Med* 2017;0:1–10. doi:10.1136/bjsports-2017-097699).

Rep. Miller has reached out to PATS to collaborate on developing a concussion protocol for our law enforcement officers. Most athletic trainers in the Commonwealth currently utilize some type of concussion protocol, which also includes a safe return to activity. Part of any concussion protocol is education and PATS has been providing education for student-athletes, parents, coaches, physicians, physician assistants, and most recently school nurses, for the past several years. We look forward to helping our men and women in law enforcement.

It would be my pleasure to answer any questions or comments that you may have. Please contact me at president@gopats.org.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATS President