



House Bill 427

Education – Maryland Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: February 12, 2014

To: Ways and Means Committee,
Health & Government Operations Committee

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS HB 427 WITH AMENDMENTS**. The bill would create notification, education, and player removal protocols in school athletic activities and youth sports programs for the medical condition known as sudden cardiac arrest.

The provisions of HB 427 are modeled after 2011 legislation (HB 858/SB 771) that created similar provisions for the handling of concussions. At the time, MACo worked with members of this Committee to create a concussion policy that would work for the more structured school athletic environment and the less structured volunteer youth sports programs. Both MACo and county parks and recreation departments supported the final version of the concussion bill.

Similar to the 2011 legislation, MACo would seek several clarifications regarding HB 427:

- (1) The bill contains language that says the bill's school provisions do not expand or reduce any civil liability on the part of a county board member or school employee (§ 7-436(b)). MACo believes similar language may be appropriate for volunteers in youth sports programs.
- (2) Language in § 7-426(h)(1) of the bill requires a youth sports program that uses a public school facility shall provide annually to the county board of education a statement of intent to comply with the requirements for the management of sudden cardiac arrest of a participant under "this section." MACo believes the section reference should be replaced with a more specific reference to "subsection (e) of this section" which contains the management provisions.

- (3) MACo believes that the requirement that a youth sports program make available information on sudden cardiac arrest to coaches, youth athletes, and parents or guardians of youth athletes under § 14-501 of the Health General Article should also apply when the program is using school facilities rather than the more complicated acknowledgement process required for school athletic programs.

Sudden cardiac arrest is a serious but thankfully rare condition among student and youth athletes and MACo is supportive of HB 427's underlying goal to prevent future deaths in young people. However, as discussed above, MACo does feel that several clarifications are needed in how the bill's provisions will apply to youth sports programs. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee give HB 427 a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**.