
Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

While sports-related injuries do not always cause death, the leading cause of death from these injuries is traumatic brain injury. A traumatic brain injury (TBI) may be defined as a blow or jolt to the head, or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the normal functions of the brain. TBI may result when the head violently and suddenly hits an object, or when something pierces the skull and enters brain tissue. Symptoms of TBI can be mild, moderate, or severe, depending on the extent of the brain damage. Mild cases may result in a brief change in a person's mental state or consciousness, while severe cases may lead to extended periods of unconsciousness, coma, or even death.

Boxing is an example of a very popular local sport where the participants are at risk of suffering from brain damage. Professional and amateur boxers can suffer permanent brain damage over time. The strength of a professional boxer's fist approximates the force of being hit with a 13-pound bowling ball traveling at 20 miles per hour, or about 52 times as strong as gravity. Based on a study by the Journal of Combative Sport, from the period January of 1960 to August of 2011, 488 boxing-related deaths have been recorded. The study attributes 66 percent of these deaths to head, brain, or neck injuries, while one was attributed to a skull fracture. While some boxers are just slightly affected, there are those that are so severely affected that they require institutional care. Some boxers exhibit varying degrees of speech difficulty, stiffness, unsteadiness, memory loss, and inappropriate behavior. In some studies, 15 to 40 percent of former boxers have shown symptoms of chronic brain injury. A majority of these boxers have mild symptoms. Recent studies have shown that most professional boxers (even those without symptoms) have some degree of brain damage.

This bill aims to educate the public, especially student and amateur athletes, about the dangers of sports-related brain injuries.

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
as.

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1 AN ACT
2 TO INCREASE AWARENESS ABOUT SPORTS-RELATED
3 TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Traumatic Brain Injury
5 Prevention and Information Act of 2012."

6 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policies and Objectives.* – Pursuant to Article 2, Sec. 17 of
7 the Constitution, the State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture
8 and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total
9 human liberation and development. This Act is aimed at improving awareness, prevention, and
10 treatment of sports-related concussions and brain injuries through the Department of Education,
11 the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Health, and the Philippine Sports
12 Commission.

13 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, these terms are defined as
14 follows:

15 (a) "Traumatic Brain Injury" is a blow or jolt to the head, or a penetrating head injury
16 that disrupts the normal function of the brain.

17 (b) "Athlete" is any student who participates in an athletic program of an educational
18 institution or an amateur athlete as defined by law.

1 SECTION 4. *Requirement for Prevention and Treatment Programs in Organized Sports.*

2 – All educational institutions and amateur sports programs shall have a program for the
3 prevention and treatment of sports-related concussions and brain injuries.

4 SECTION 5. *Program to Address Sports-Related Traumatic Brain Injuries.* – The

5 Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Health, and
6 the Philippine Sports Commission shall create a program addressing the improvement of
7 awareness, prevention, and treatment of sports-related concussions and brain injuries within two
8 (2) years from the effectivity of this Act.

9 SECTION 6. *Programs in Educational Institutions.* – The first part of the program shall

10 be the education of parents and student athletes about the prevention, symptoms, and dangers of
11 sports-related brain injuries. This shall be accomplished by a brain injury fact sheet that will be
12 provided yearly to parents, students, coaches, and athletic trainers. The fact sheet shall also
13 include recommended time periods to keep students who have experienced a brain injury out of
14 further athletic competition. Educational institutions shall formulate their own written policies
15 and procedures about how to prevent and treat these injuries when a student is suspected of
16 having a concussion or other brain injury.

17 SECTION 7. *Requirement for Student and Amateur Athletes.* – Any student or amateur

18 athlete who sustains or is suspected of sustaining a brain injury shall be immediately removed
19 from competition or practice and not allowed to return until medical clearance is obtained. The
20 student or amateur athlete must be cleared by a doctor trained in the evaluation and management
21 of concussions who must state, in writing, that the athlete is cleared to resume physical activity.

22 SECTION 8. *General Guidelines for All Sports.* – The following guidelines shall be

23 observed for all sports activities:

- 24 (a) Supervise younger children at all times, and do not let them use sporting
25 equipment or play sports unsuitable for their age.

- 1 (b) Do not dive in water less than 12 feet deep or in above-ground pools.
- 2 (c) Follow all rules at water parks and swimming pools.
- 3 (d) Wear appropriate clothing for the sport.
- 4 (e) Do not wear any clothing that can interfere with your vision.
- 5 (f) Do not participate in sports when you are ill or very tired.
- 6 (g) Obey all traffic signals, and be aware of drivers when cycling, skateboarding or
7 rollerblading.
- 8 (h) Avoid uneven or unpaved surfaces when cycling, skateboarding or rollerblading.
- 9 (i) Perform regular safety checks of sports fields, playgrounds and equipment.
- 10 (j) Discard and replace sporting equipment or protective gear that is damaged.

11 SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders and
12 rules and regulations or part thereof, contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act,
13 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

14 SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision of this Act be found
15 unconstitutional by a court of law, such provision shall be severed from the remainder of this
16 Act, and such action shall not affect the enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Act.

17 SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
18 complete publication in any two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,