

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE DRH80477-LE-247A (4/10)

Short Title: Ensure Fair Competition in School Athletics.

(Local)

Sponsors: Representative Spear.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ENSURE FAIR COMPETITION IN SCHOOL ATHLETICS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly recognizes the importance of student participation in interscholastic athletics for developing leadership and team skills, building character, and promoting healthy lifestyles. The General Assembly believes that fair competition is a prerequisite to achieving these goals and encouraging student participation in athletics. The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) The level of fair competition is greatly reduced when small schools are forced to compete with much larger schools rather than schools of comparable size.
- (2) Unfair competition discourages the development of strong athletic programs in small schools and could place athletes from small schools in greater risk of injury.
- (3) The health and safety of student athletes is of the utmost importance.
- (4) Small schools should not be forced to compete in a conference of much larger schools when a conference of small schools is viable and desired.
- (5) The unique geography of coastal counties is an important consideration.

SECTION 2. If at least five small high schools within a geographic region of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) decide to form a small school conference within the NCHSAA framework, the NCHSAA shall permit the creation of such small school conference. For purposes of this section, a "small school" shall mean a secondary school with an average daily membership of 300 students or less, and a "small school conference" shall mean an athletic conference consisting only of small schools. Such small school conference shall be open to any

1 small school that is a member school of the NCHSAA and is located in that geographic
2 region.

3 **SECTION 3.** A small school conference created under this section shall be
4 afforded all rights and privileges granted to other NCHSAA conferences. A small
5 school that opts to join such a small school conference shall be afforded all rights and
6 privileges granted to other NCHSAA schools. No school or entity shall discriminate or
7 retaliate against a small school that opts to join a small school conference.

8 **SECTION 4.** A small school conference may be created for the 2006-2007
9 school year provided the NCHSAA is notified no later than September 15, 2006.
10 Schools joining a small school conference by that date may withdraw, without penalty,
11 from any scheduling contracts previously entered into for the 2006-2007 season.

12 **SECTION 5.** This section applies notwithstanding G.S. 115C-12(23) and
13 applies only to schools located in Dare, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell, or Washington Counties.

14 **SECTION 6.** This act is effective when it becomes law.