

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 749 (McKinnor and Quirk-Silva)

As Amended September 2, 2025

Majority vote

SUMMARY

AB 749 requires the State Public Health Officer to convene a Blue Ribbon Commission on the development of a California Department of Youth Sports, with specified members, to conduct a study on the need for a centralized entity charge with supporting and regulating.

Senate Amendments

Senate amendments redirect responsibility for the commission from the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency to the State Public Health Officer in the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), allow additional time for the commission to complete its required report, and other conforming changes.

COMMENTS

Background. While the Department of Education oversees physical education requirements and athletics in California schools, outside of the schools, no state entity currently regulates youth sports. State law in the area is spotty and largely related to specific safety issues such as safety protocols around head injuries, training regarding sudden cardiac arrest, and regulation of tackle football. In other contexts, sports facilities themselves are regulated, particularly swimming pools, again to ensure safety. CDPH does have a Nutrition and Physical Activity Branch within its Center for Healthy Families to address nutrition security and physical activity through statewide, regional, and local programs and partnerships with an emphasis on communities that experience the greatest health disparities. Through funding provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the branch's annual budget is approximately \$81 million, of which approximately \$55 million is dedicated to local projects across the state. In addition to funding local programs, the branch manages a statewide social marketing campaign, implements state level nutrition and physical activity policy strategies, and supports the Governor's Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being.

The Governor's Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being (Council) was created by the Governor in June 2021 in response to changes in health behaviors brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council was funded in the 2022-2023 budget with a one-time investment of \$10 million to be available until June 30, 2025, \$7.5 million of which was spent. The remaining \$2.5 million was reappropriated to continue the work of the Council.

The Council's goals are as follows:

- a) Promote evidence-based, daily mindfulness and breathwork practices for youth and families, especially at schools.
- b) Promote all types of physical activity for youth and families with a focus on daily movement, skill development and play, especially at schools.

- c) Reimagine a more positive and inclusive sports and fitness culture for California youth and families to bolster health, community and belonging for all Californians.

The Council started an initiative "Move Your Body, Calm Your Mind" to provide guidance and resources on physical activity and mental well-being, increase awareness about the benefits of movement, sport, nutrition, and overall mental wellness; encourage intergenerational physical fitness activities, promote equitable access to outdoor and physical activities for underserved communities; and facilitate collaboration among federal, state, and local agencies, education, business and industry, and others. Among the activities of the initiative is an effort to train 25,000 coaches across California in positive youth coaching by the end of 2025.

Gaps in access to youth sports. The LA84 Foundation published a 2024 report on play equity in California with several key findings related to youth physical activity and access to sports based on quantitative and qualitative surveys of households with school-aged children. The report found that a majority of California youth are less active than they should be according to the CDC's recommendation that youth engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day, with ten percent of youth who are "never" active and only 39% of youth having daily physical education at school. The rates of physical activity are lowest for Latinas and Black females, Latino youth in general, youth with disabilities, youth with annual household incomes below \$50,000 and youth in the Inland Empire. The only subgroups with the majority meeting the CDC's guidelines is youth in households with incomes of at least \$100,000 and White male youth. The study did find that access to organized sports and structured play has the potential to increase levels of regular physical activity but that parents identified cost as a key barrier to accessing youth sports. The study also found support for increased state funding for sports.

According to the Author

"The current youth sports landscape is highly fragmented and unfair. Existing practices, pay-to-play models, a lack of facilities, the absence of statewide coaching and safety standards, hyper-competitive leagues, and inaccessible community-based programs deny every child the opportunity to reap the lifelong benefits of youth sports participation which include positive socioemotional development, community cohesion, mental and physical health, academic success, and overall healthier and stronger communities. This bill is a crucial first step towards engaging with experts on the establishment of a centralized entity charged with improving access, involvement, and the sustainability of youth sports across California leading to healthier and more resilient youth, young adults, and communities."

Arguments in Support

Sponsor, the Play Equity Fund, and many supporters write that the current landscape remains highly fragmented and unfair. The pay-to-play models, lack of facilities, the absence of coaching standards, and inaccessible community sports programs deny children the opportunity to achieve wellness, academic success, and positive socioemotional development. While two out of three children in California are not meeting CDC standards for daily physical activity, 915,000 youth in California have a current diagnosis of anxiety, behavioral or conduct problems, depression or other mental health conditions. They state that addressing the current youth sports landscape is crucial, as research has consistently shown that sports participation and physical activity lead to improved physical health, mental health, and more resilient adolescents and young adults.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, this bill has unknown one-time General Fund costs, potentially hundreds of thousands to low millions, for CHHS (now CDPH) to convene the commission and conduct the study.

VOTES:**ASM ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM: 7-0-2**

YES: Ward, Elhawary, McKinnor, Ortega, Quirk-Silva, Valencia, Zbur

ABS, ABST OR NV: Lackey, Jeff Gonzalez

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 62-3-14

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO: DeMaio, Gallagher, Patterson

ABS, ABST OR NV: Alanis, Castillo, Dixon, Ellis, Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Hoover, Lackey, Macedo, Sanchez, Ta, Tangipa, Wallis

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CONSULTANT: Brian V. Anderson, Jr. / A.,E.,S., & T. / (916) 319-3450

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