

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 17

Whereas, sports participation has become part of American life ingrained into the consciousness of society; and

Whereas, sports officials act as on-field judges for their respective sports and as neutral participants who have no stake in the outcome of the game; and

Whereas, it is critical that there are a sufficient number of qualified sports officials to enforce the rules of the game and judge potential disputes between participants on the field; and

Whereas, many sports officials volunteer their time or receive only minimal compensation and participate out of a sheer love of the game and to teach children who play the game the valuable lessons that are learned through participating in sports, including sportsmanship, teamwork, and complying with the rules of the game to achieve a common goal; and

Whereas, sports officials deserve our collective respect and must have our collective assistance in creating a safe and secure environment for our children to play; and

Whereas, increasingly, sports officials are subjected to verbal and even physical assault by disgruntled fans as well as certain coaches and players; and

Whereas, although education continues to be important, recent trends point out the need for strong sanctions against those who engage in bad behavior at sporting events; and

Whereas, young people observe both the good and bad behavior of their sports heroes, other athletes, coaches, and fans and often emulate that behavior in either a positive or negative manner; and

Whereas, players, coaches and fans should be deterred from assaulting officials by local authorities handing out more severe penalties to ensure that the fans, especially young children, realize that it is not acceptable to attack an official; and

Whereas, as a society, we must act on the belief that respect for authority is critical to living, working, and playing together in a civil society governed by the rule of law:

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-eighth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby call on all school districts, little league programs, high school, college, and recreational programs, along with law enforcement and prosecutors, to do all they can to put an end to the increased threats and assaults on sports officials and to prosecute such criminal acts to the full extent of the law; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Higher Education, the Attorney General, and the Department of Public Safety.