



Allegheny County Council

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Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title:	Motion of the Council of Allegheny County urging the expeditious passage of H.B. 1972, introduced by Representative Rob Matzie in the PA House of Representatives, that will look to comprehensively overhaul the structure and authority, review the finances, and examine the continued viability of the PA Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA).				
Sponsors:	John Palmiere, Bob Macey, Anita Prizio, Bethany Hallam, Jack Betkowski, Dan Grzybek, David Bonaroti, Patrick Catena, Sam DeMarco, Suzanne Filiaggi, Nick Futules, Paul Klein, Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, Robert Palmosina				
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2/6/2024	1	County Council	Passed	Pass

Motion of the Council of Allegheny County urging the expeditious passage of H.B. 1972, introduced by Representative Rob Matzie in the PA House of Representatives, that will look to comprehensively overhaul the structure and authority, review the finances, and examine the continued viability of the PA Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA).

Whereas, it is the judgement of Council that the PIAA has forgotten its purpose which, as listed on their website, is to “organize, develop, and direct an interscholastic athletic program which will promote, protect, and conserve the health and physical welfare of all participants”; and

Whereas, the PIAA’s recent denial of Aliquippa football’s appeal to remain in Class 4A next season contradicts the PIAA’s purpose of “protecting and conserving the health and physical welfare of all participants”; and

Whereas, based upon enrollment, Aliquippa would qualify for Class 2A. However, in order to challenge their players, Aliquippa volunteered to play up a class and moved to Class 3A. Based upon the PIAA’s competitive balance rules - which considers enrollment, success and transfers - the PIAA forced Aliquippa to move to Class 4A where they have won state titles in 2021 and 2023. Now again referencing their competitive balance rules, the PIAA is forcing Aliquippa to play in Class 5A; and

Whereas, Aliquippa’s most recent enrollment was 156 boys, suggesting they should qualify for Class 2A. Having to play schools in Class 5A will force Aliquippa to attempt to compete against schools that have anywhere from 424 to 619 boys enrolled. While Aliquippa’s athletes may be able to compete with schools of this size, if players are injured, the lack of depth necessary to compete with the sheer numbers of the other schools puts Aliquippa at a health and physical welfare disadvantage; and

Whereas, besides the difference in enrollment numbers, Aliquippa is at a huge disadvantage when it

comes to athletic budgets. According to a recent Triblive article, Aliquippa spends less than \$100,000 on athletics while many of the larger Class 5A schools spend half a million dollars or more. The discrepancy in funding could lead to larger schools having the most up-to-date facilities and safety equipment, leaving Aliquippa's athletes further behind; and

Whereas, to continue to point out the unfairness and inconsistencies in decisions made by the PIAA, Southern Columbia, a school in eastern PA, has won the last seven (7) state championships in Class 2A, yet the competitive balance rules have not been applied to that school, solely due to lack of transfers. However, seven consecutive championships in the same classification seems to be the definition of competitive imbalance; and

Whereas, we commend Representative Matzie for introducing this legislation and his willingness to review the overall structure of the PIAA. We encourage his colleagues to join in this effort and quickly pass the legislation so a review can begin as soon as possible.

The Council of the County of Allegheny therefore hereby moves as follows:

That Allegheny County Council hereby urges the PA House of Representatives and then the Pennsylvania Senate to quickly enact H.B. 1972. Additionally, it is hereby directed that a copy of this signed Sense of Council Motion be sent to Aliquippa High School and to Representative Rob Matzie.