

HOUSE BILL 817

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11r2742
CF 11r1846

By: **Delegate Shoemaker**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2021

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Department of Education – Interscholastic Athletics Eligibility Waiver –**
3 **Graduate Athletes**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Department of Education to waive certain eligibility
5 requirements for participation in interscholastic athletics in order to allow certain
6 graduate athletes to participate in certain interscholastic athletics under certain
7 circumstances; providing that certain graduate athletes may participate in an
8 interscholastic athletic program only at a certain school; providing that a certain
9 graduate athlete may be enrolled at an institution of higher education while
10 participating in a certain athletic program; defining a certain term; providing for the
11 termination of this Act; and generally relating to interscholastic athletics eligibility
12 for graduate athletes.

13 Preamble

14 WHEREAS, Precautions taken to contain the COVID–19 pandemic have severely
15 impacted a student’s ability to engage in high school sports and to be eligible for college
16 scholarship opportunities through participation in high school sports; and

17 WHEREAS, The opportunity to play high school sports empowers student athletes,
18 provides necessary life skills, and supports community engagement; and

19 WHEREAS, Enrollment in many high schools in the State has been steadily
20 decreasing due to the COVID–19 pandemic; now, therefore,

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
22 That:

23 (a) In this section, “graduate athlete” means an individual who:

24 (1) was enrolled as a 12th grade student in a public high school in the State

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 during the 2020–2021 school year;

2 (2) graduated from the public high school in 2021; and

3 (3) was eligible to participate in an interscholastic sport at the high school
4 level at a Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association member school during
5 the 2020–2021 school year.

6 (b) The State Department of Education shall waive the following eligibility
7 requirements for participation in interscholastic athletics at the high school level under
8 COMAR 13A.06.03.02 for graduate athletes for the 2021–2022 school year only:

9 (1) enrollment and attendance at a Maryland Public Secondary Schools
10 Athletic Association member school;

11 (2) academic progress requirements;

12 (3) age restrictions; and

13 (4) graduate eligibility restrictions.

14 (c) A graduate athlete may participate in an interscholastic athletic program only
15 at the public high school from which the graduate athlete graduated.

16 (d) A graduate athlete may be enrolled at an institution of higher education while
17 participating in an interscholastic athletic program under this section.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
19 1, 2021. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2022, this
20 Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no
21 further force and effect.