



NASHIA

November 29, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
1236 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy:

As you consider the final appropriations package for fiscal year 2023 for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the undersigned organizations request that you appropriate at least the House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Committee level of \$4 million to fund the National Concussion Surveillance System (NCSS). We also appreciated the Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Committee level of \$3 million but would like to see the program funded as close as possible to the \$5 million authorized-level included in the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Program Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Pub. Law 115-377).

Unfortunately, while TBIs are considered a significant public health issue in the United States, and the leading cause of death and disability in both older adults and youth, existing national data underestimate the prevalence of brain injury across the country. Most estimates come solely from data collected through emergency department (ED) admissions, which is not reflective of the many individuals who either do not seek care for concussions, seek care outside of emergency departments, or those who do not report in state data systems.

A 2014 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, "Sports-Related Concussions in Youth: Improving the Science, Changing the Culture," recommended that a national surveillance system be implemented in order to address the gaps with regard to existing data systems. While the IOM report focused on the need for data relating to sports-related concussions, data is needed to capture all incidences of concussions and TBIs that may be due to falls, military service, motor vehicle crashes, work related injuries, substance use disorder, intimate partner violence, long COVID, anomalous health incidents, recreational injuries, and more.

The CDC Injury Center conducted a pilot to test the NCSS using a random-digit dial telephone survey of U.S. households in 2018-2019. The NCSS pilot found that **adult respondents reported more than 30 times as many TBIs** in the past 12 months compared to estimates using ED data from national datasets, while **children and adolescents reported approximately 17 times as many TBIs** in the past 12 months as compared to estimates using ED from national datasets. These numbers underscore that



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current available data is insufficient and more is needed to better understand the national prevalence of brain injury in order for us to better provide resources for individuals.

We were grateful for the \$500,000 of funding for the NCSS provided during the last Congress. We understand these dollars are being used to add questions related to brain injury to a current health survey. While we are confident that these additional questions will build upon our understanding of the national prevalence of brain injury, the \$500,000 did not allow for a comprehensive set of questions to be asked as part of the survey. For example, the survey will not be able to ask follow-up questions to accurately determine if someone has experienced a brain injury, how the injury was sustained, or what kind of care they received.

In order for the CDC Concussion Surveillance System to be able to meet its goals, we need to see at least \$4 million funded for the program. This funding will build upon the NCSS Pilot Program and the questions being added to existing surveys to develop a comprehensive NCSS that will adequately capture the extent of concussions in the United States, identify populations at risk necessary to determine federal programmatic priorities, support and evaluate prevention activities and efforts, and assist States in planning for ongoing follow up and treatment as the result concussion-related disabilities.

As such, we strongly request at least the House-passed version of \$4 million for the National Concussion Surveillance System to ensure that we accurately determine the incidence of concussions, particularly among the most vulnerable of Americans. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA)
AANS/CNS Joint Section on Neurotrauma & Critical Care
Advancing States
Alzheimer's Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (AAPMR)
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Brain Coalition (ABC)
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Sports Medicine
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM)
American Physical Therapy Association
American Trauma Society (ATS)
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN)
Brain Injury Association of America
Center on Brain Injury Research and Training, University of Oregon
Child Injury Prevention Alliance
Concussion Game Plan
Concussion Legacy Foundation



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Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Friends of TBI Model Systems
Injury Prevention Research Center at Emory
Institute to Promote Athlete Health & Wellness
International Brain Injury Society
Matthew Gfeller Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
MomsTeam Institute of Youth Sports Safety/SmartTeams Program
National Alliance for Youth Sports
National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)
National Safety Council (NSC)
National Youth Sports Health & Safety Institute
North American Brain Injury Society
PINK Concussions
Police Families for Smart Policies
Pop Warner Little Scholars
Safe Kids Worldwide
Safe States Alliance
SCORE Program, Children's National Hospital
Society for Public Health Education
Sports Institute at University of Washington Medicine
The National Concussion Management Center
UGA Concussion Research Laboratory
United States Snowboard and Freeski Association (USASA)
United States Brain Injury Alliance
USABaseball
USA Field Hockey
USA Football
USA Lacrosse