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## **ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY PRESIDENT TESTIFIES AT UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL HEARING**

**Wednesday September 8, 2010** – Athletic Trainers' Society of New Jersey President along with a retired NFL player, two physicians, a representative of the Brain Injury Association of America and a student-athlete testified Wednesday at a Congressional hearing about the need for federal guidelines and funds to help protect student athletes from the potentially devastating consequences of repeat concussions.

The field hearing in Newark convened at the Prudential Center's Fire Lounge by U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone Jr., chair of the health subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee was about protecting school-age athletes from sports-related concussion injury.

Pallone and U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr., D-Paterson, received comments about the ConTACT (for Concussion Treatment and Care Tools) Act, introduced last year by Pascrell in memory of Ryne Dougherty, a Montclair High School student who died almost two years ago after returning to a football game without fully recovering from a previous concussion.

Michael Prybicien, the head athletic trainer at Passaic High School and president of the Athletic Trainers' Society of New Jersey, stated during his testimony that he sees some progress in concussion education and management. "I think a cultural change is taking place," he said. "Student-athletes are more willing to come out and report their symptoms." While there are still some "old-school coaches," he said, athletic trainers — on staff at 86 percent of the state's high schools — are well aware of the symptoms and treatment guidelines.

Prybicien testimony focused on the need of continuing the concussion education process to parents, coaches, athletes and even health care professionals as the research and information on concussions is continually evolving. In addition, he stressed the following areas of concussion care; education, recognition, reporting and management in which athletic trainers who are only at 42% of the schools nationwide can be a valuable asset.

Parents, coaches, athletes or medical professionals interested in learning more about concussion care can contact the ATSNJ at 973-933-4933 or visit the ATSNJ website at [www.atsnj.org](http://www.atsnj.org)

### **ABOUT THE ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY**

ATSNJ, Inc. consists of Licensed Athletic Trainers, physicians and other allied health care professionals whose goal is to promote quality healthcare for athletes in any setting