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**AB-749 Youth Sports for All Act.** (2025-2026)

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**Assembly Bill No. 749**

**CHAPTER 705**

An act to add and repeal Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 124250) of Chapter 4 of Part 2 of Division 106 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to youth sports, and making an appropriation therefor.

[ Approved by Governor October 13, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 13, 2025. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 749, McKinnor. Youth Sports for All Act.

Existing law provides various programs for youth and adolescent health, including requiring a youth sports organization that elects to offer an athletic program to ensure athletes have access to an automated external defibrillator during official practice and regulating youth football. Existing law also authorizes a community youth athletic program to request state and federal level criminal history information for volunteer or hired coach candidates.

This bill, the Youth Sports for All Act, would require the State Public Health Officer to establish and convene the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Development of a California Department of Youth Sports or an Equivalent Centralized Entity to conduct a comprehensive study on the need for and feasibility of creating a centralized entity charged with supporting and regulating youth sports, as provided, on or before July 1, 2026, or 6 months after implementation commences as described below, whichever is later. The bill would require the commission to submit the study to the Legislature and the Governor on or before January 1, 2028, or 2 years after implementation commences, whichever is later. The bill would make implementation of its provisions contingent upon an appropriation by the Legislature or upon the State Department of Public Health obtaining sufficient funds from federal, nonprofit, or private sources.

This bill would create the Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Fund in the State Treasury and would authorize moneys in the account to be expended by the department, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for purposes of the commission. The bill would create the Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Special Fund Subaccount within the fund for the receipt and deposit of the aforementioned federal, nonprofit, or private moneys, and would continuously appropriate moneys in the subaccount to the department for purposes of the commission, thereby making an appropriation.

This bill would repeal its provisions on January 1, 2033.

Vote: majority Appropriation: yes Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The lack of standards and certification for coaching in youth sports have resulted in an unregulated youth sports coaching landscape. There is currently no state-level standardization or required certification for coaches, leading to inconsistency in training, safety, and quality in youth sports.

(b) The unregulated coaching landscape poses health and safety risks. Untrained or poorly trained coaches may not be equipped to handle the needs of diverse youth, promote positive sports experiences, and ensure safety.

(c) The fragmented community youth sports system is currently made up of disjointed networks with no single unified system to coordinate or oversee community-based youth sports across regions or organizations, creating inefficiencies and inconsistencies in quality.

(d) This fragmented system has resulted in the duplication of efforts. Multiple organizations work in overlapping areas, causing confusion and misallocation of resources.

(e) The inadequate funding of community-based sports fails to meet the growing demand for quality sports and fitness opportunities, particularly when considering the physical and mental health benefits of organized activity.

(f) The pay-to-play model for youth sports has become increasingly exclusionary, driven by a win-at-all-cost mentality that is creating undue stress and anxiety for participants and encouraging overspecialization at an early age, increasing injury risk. In addition, excessive travel, fees, and equipment costs create financial barriers for many families, leaving millions of children unable to participate in organized youth sports.

(g) Youth sports provide numerous benefits, including improved physical and mental health, academic success, and social development. They provide the opportunity to develop resilience and teamwork as well as other social skills that help make youth athletes life ready. Despite these benefits, participation rates vary significantly across racial and socioeconomic lines.

(h) The 2024 Play Equity Report, commissioned by the LA84 Foundation, highlights stark disparities, with Black and Latino youth participation in structured sports as low as 47 percent and 45 percent, respectively, compared to 59 percent for White youth. Barriers include cost, lack of facilities, and limited programming in underserved communities.

(i) A centralized entity, such as a California department or commission of youth sports, can be an essential entity for creating an integrated, equitable, and sustainable framework for youth sports. Through coordinated efforts, updated standards, investment, and a focus on reducing financial barriers, California can ensure all children have the opportunity to access and engage in sports and experience its lifelong physical, mental, and academic benefits.

(j) Models from other countries, where sports ministries successfully coordinate national sports policies, provide valuable examples.

(k) A centralized entity could address inequities by promoting inclusive, accessible, and affordable youth sports programs and coaching education.

**SEC. 2.** Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 124250) is added to Chapter 4 of Part 2 of Division 106 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

**Article 2.8. Youth Sports for All Act**

**124250.** This article shall be known, and may be cited, as the Youth Sports for All Act.

**124251.** For purposes of this article, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Centralized entity" means a department, commission, board, council, or their equivalent.

(b) "Commission" means the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Development of a California Department of Youth Sports or an Equivalent Centralized Entity established and convened pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 124252.

(c) "Department" means the State Department of Public Health.

(d) "Youth sports" has the same meaning as "youth sports organization" as defined in Section 124235.

**124252.** (a) (1) The State Public Health Officer shall, on or before July 1, 2026, or six months after implementation of this article commences pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 124256, whichever is later, establish and convene the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Development of a California Department of Youth Sports or an Equivalent Centralized Entity to conduct a comprehensive study to review the need for and feasibility of creating a centralized entity charged with supporting and regulating youth sports.

(2) The commission shall be composed of all of the following:

- (A) The State Public Health Officer or their designee.
- (B) Ten members appointed by the Governor.
- (C) Three members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules.
- (D) Three members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.

(3) Each member appointed pursuant to paragraph (2) shall have expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- (A) Convening state, local, and national organizations focused on addressing barriers in youth sports.
- (B) Designing and implementing equitable strategies and programs to expand youth access to sports and play, including by providing technical assistance.
- (C) Community-based youth development, including youth sports, play, physical activity, mental health, training, and coaching.
- (D) Californians with disabilities, including adaptive youth sports programs.
- (E) Publicly operated youth sports programs.
- (F) Academic or research-informed knowledge of youth sports, youth development, physical education, or equivalent fields of study.
- (G) Playing or supporting youth sports, including athletes and parents.
- (H) Being a member of or representing an equity-focused organization that works with an impacted community whose lived experience with youth sports will inform the work of the commission.

(4) In making appointments to the commission, the appointing authorities shall take into consideration the diversity of the state so that the commission's composition reflects the communities of California.

(b) The commission shall be cochaired by both of the following:

- (1) The State Public Health Officer or their designee.
- (2) An appointed member selected by the members of the commission.

(c) The commission shall meet at least quarterly and keep official records of their proceedings. The commission's meetings shall be open to the public.

(d) The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary traveling and other expenses incurred in performing their duties and responsibilities.

**124254.** (a) The commission shall conduct a study of issues in youth sports that includes all of the following:

(1) An assessment of the need and potential for a centralized entity to improve access to and involvement in sports for all youth, regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, income, or geographic location, that addresses issues in youth sports, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- (A) Disparities in youth sports programming quality and availability.
- (B) How to foster a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for youth sports.
- (C) How to increase and integrate regular physical activity and sports into the daily lives of youth, including, but not limited to, through after school programs and community-based organizations.
- (D) How to implement statewide coaching certification requirements to ensure quality training for all coaches in youth sports.
- (E) How to improve training and strategies for youth development, safety protocols, equity and inclusion, and sport-specific knowledge across the youth sports landscape.
- (F) How to update and promote practices and safety protocols, including support for diverse forms of physical activity to increase equity and access to youth sports and play.
- (G) How to better integrate structured sports and team-building activities into the daily lives of youth.

(H) How to create a mechanism for sustainable and adequate state investment in youth sports to improve accessibility, infrastructure, and overall quality.

(I) How to increase state investment in the expansion of accessible, free, or low-cost after school and community-based youth sports programs that complement academic and recreational goals.

(J) How to create a mechanism for state and local funding initiatives that reduce or eliminate financial barriers to youth sports participation.

(2) An evaluation of and recommendations for the duties, powers, and responsibilities of a centralized entity, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(A) A determination of the appropriate levels of oversight of relevant laws and regulations, including safety and licensing requirements for coaches and staff of youth sports.

(B) A determination of which youth sports would benefit from support and regulation from a centralized entity.

(C) Development and administration of statewide licensing and safety requirements.

(D) Development and administration of statewide youth sports access and quality standards.

(E) Development of strategies and best practices to improve access and equity to competitive and noncompetitive youth sports and play.

(F) Coordination of relevant state, local, and federal entities to improve access and equity in youth sports programs, including sharing best practices and resources.

(G) Identifying duplication of efforts and inefficiencies among state and local entities and youth sports programs.

(H) Identifying data gaps and development of data collection and reporting requirements.

(3) A review of and recommendations for both of the following:

(A) The costs of creating and sustaining a centralized entity.

(B) Potential funding sources, including state, federal, private, and philanthropic sources.

(b) In conducting the study, the commission shall analyze models of centralized entities in other states and countries that are charged with supporting and regulating youth sports.

(c) The department may enter into a contract with an external entity, including an institution of higher education or a nonprofit organization with relevant expertise, to conduct the study required by this section.

(d) Before finalizing the study and before submission pursuant to subdivision (e), the commission shall publically present the study and provide an opportunity for public feedback.

(e) (1) The commission shall submit the study conducted pursuant to this section to the Legislature and the Governor on or before January 1, 2028, or two years after implementation of this article commences pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 124256, whichever is later.

(2) A report to be submitted to the Legislature pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

**124256.** (a) The implementation of this article is contingent upon either of the following:

(1) An appropriation for its purposes in the annual Budget Act or another statute.

(2) Sufficient funds being obtained by the department from federal, nonprofit, or private sources for the purposes of implementing this article.

(b) The department may use funds from federal, nonprofit, or private sources to augment an appropriation made to implement this article.

(c) (1) The Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Fund is hereby created in the State Treasury for the receipt and deposit of the moneys specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a). Moneys in the fund may be expended by the department, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for the purposes of implementing this article.

(2) The Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Special Fund Subaccount is hereby created, in the Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Fund, for the receipt and deposit of only federal, nonprofit, or private moneys, as specified in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) and in subdivision (b). Notwithstanding Section 13340 of the Government Code, moneys in the subaccount are hereby continuously appropriated without regard to fiscal years to, and may be expended by, the department for the purposes of implementing this article.

(d) This article shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2033, and as of that date is repealed.