ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 74

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 1, 2018

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS
Condemns use of performance-enhancing drugs by student-athletes.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION condemning the use of performance-enhancing drugs by student-athletes and urging all high school coaches, athletic directors, student-athletes, and private competitions such as “World’s Strongest Man,” “The Arnold,” and “America’s Strongest Man” in the State, to educate themselves about the dangers of and oppose the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

WHEREAS, The use of performance-enhancing drugs (PED), including anabolic steroids, human growth hormone, and stimulants, poses serious health risks, such as an increased chance of suffering a heart attack or developing cancer; and

WHEREAS, Performance-enhancing drugs can affect growth and maturation because the artificially increased level of sex hormones in adolescence can signal the bones to stop growing prematurely; and

WHEREAS, When misused, PEDs can increase irritability, aggression, euphoria, energy, paranoia, distractibility, forgetfulness, confusion, cause extreme egocentrism, and extreme mood changes; and

WHEREAS, The use of PEDs has been linked with high-risk behaviors, including the use of illicit drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, sharing needles, driving while under the influence, and suicide; and

WHEREAS, Student-athletes are prone to using PEDs to influence their body images and increase athletic performance in a highly competitive atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, According to a study conducted by the Digital Citizens Alliance, a consumer group working to make the Internet safer, 77 percent of young males said PED use by professional athletes gave student-athletes the impression that taking PEDs was necessary to succeed in professional sports or improve their athletic performance; and

WHEREAS, Knowingly allowing or encouraging athletes to use PEDs not only jeopardizes their lives, but also the lives of young aspiring athletes who may be unaware of the risks of using PEDs and oftentimes are influenced by the conduct of the athletes they hope to emulate; and

WHEREAS, Coaches and parents should talk to their children about the effects of PEDs in order to effectively stop PED use; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, coaches, parents, and athletic directors must be able to recognize any signs associated with PED use in a student-athlete, including a sharp increase in strength or erratic behavior and should receive the proper support, tools, and education necessary to prevent or stop the use of PEDs; and

WHEREAS, Different methods that are utilized in preventing or stopping individuals from using PEDs include drug testing, education, and informational programs to raise awareness of the risks associated with PEDs, decrease social anxiety, and increase self-esteem and positive self-body image; and

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WHEREAS, In 2005, Governor Richard J. Codey established the Governor’s Task Force on Steroid Use and Prevention (“task force”) to assess and recommend measures to combat the growing problem surrounding the use of steroids and other PEDs by high school student-athletes in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, The task force provided a comprehensive report setting forth its findings and recommendations for addressing the problem of steroid use by student-athletes, with some of those recommendations being implemented by Governor Codey through an executive order; and

WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey must continue to take steps to combat the use of PEDs and condemn any individual or organization that knowingly allows or encourages the use of these drugs in any capacity; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. This House condemns the use of performance-enhancing drugs by student-athletes.

2. This House urges all high school coaches, athletic directors, student-athletes, and private competitions such as “World’s Strongest Man,” “The Arnold,” and “America’s Strongest Man” in the State, to educate themselves about the dangers of and oppose the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

3. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the Commissioner of Education, the President of the New Jersey Education Association, the Executive Director of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, and the Executive Director of the Directors of Athletics Association of New Jersey.

STATEMENT

This resolution condemns the use of performance-enhancing drugs (PED) by student-athletes. The resolution also urges all high school coaches, athletic directors, student-athletes, and private competitions such as “World’s Strongest Man,” “The Arnold,” and “America’s Strongest Man” in the State, to educate themselves about the dangers of and oppose the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

The use of PEDs, including anabolic steroids, human growth hormone, and stimulants, poses serious health risks, such as an increased chance of suffering a heart attack or developing cancer. Performance-enhancing drug use has also been linked with high-risk behaviors, including the use of illicit drugs, tobacco, and
alcohol, sharing needles, driving while under the influence, and suicide.

Student-athletes are prone to using PEDs to influence their body images and increase athletic performance in a highly competitive atmosphere. According to a study conducted by the Digital Citizens Alliance, a consumer group working to make the Internet safer, 77 percent of young males said PED use by professional athletes gave student-athletes the impression that taking PEDs was necessary to succeed in professional sports or improve their athletic performance. Coaches and parents should talk to their children about the effects of PEDs in order to effectively stop PED use. Additionally, coaches, parents, and athletic directors must be able to recognize any signs associated with PED use in a student-athlete, including a sharp increase in strength or erratic behavior and should receive the proper support, tools, and education necessary to prevent or stop the use of PEDs.

Different methods that are utilized in preventing or stopping individuals from using PEDs include drug testing, education, and informational programs to raise awareness of the risks associated with PEDs, decrease social anxiety, and increase self-esteem and positive self-body image. The State of New Jersey must continue to take steps to combat the use of PEDs and condemn any individual or organization that knowingly allows or encourages the use of these drugs in any capacity.