SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 39
BY SENATOR FIELDS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt rules relative to the use of school property and personnel for athletic activities during the 2020-2021 school year to ensure CDC and state health guidelines are implemented to protect the health and safety of student athletes, coaches, and spectators.

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease and the long-term health impacts on survivors of the disease are unknown; and

WHEREAS, studies are showing that our younger citizens, once deemed immune and mildly impacted, are experiencing both a surge in infections and serious complications weeks after the onset of the disease; and

WHEREAS, at this time there is no known vaccine or cure; and

WHEREAS, many persons carrying the disease are asymptomatic; and

WHEREAS, to control the spread of the disease, the CDC has issued phased guidelines for personal interactions; and

WHEREAS, guidance issued by the state Department of Education provides that school strategies regarding dismissals, event cancellations, and other social distancing measures will be made by local school leadership, with guidance and expertise from the regional public health medical director; and

WHEREAS, while the incidence rates of COVID-19 may vary greatly between areas of the state and the return to school may be based upon local conditions, the ability to effectively compete in athletics depends on all teams and all athletes being held to uniform standards and given equal time to condition, train, and properly prepare for the rigors of competition; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:437 requires the board to adopt rules to educate all school employees on practices and precautions to prevent the occurrence and/or spread of communicable diseases in the school setting; and
WHEREAS, there is nothing in this statute that allows the board to relinquish that responsibility to any group, private or public; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the health of our student athletes and coaches and the integrity of the competitive process, uniform statewide guidelines need to be established for the use of school property and personnel for all athletic activities that are based on the phased guidance issued by the CDC and state public health officials.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt rules relative to the use of school property and personnel for athletic activities during the 2020-2021 school year to ensure CDC and state health guidelines are implemented to protect the health and safety of student athletes, coaches, and spectators.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state superintendent of education.