

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2373

To amend section 485 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require certain institutions of higher education to develop and implement a venue-specific heat-related illnesses emergency action plan, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 22, 2025

Ms. ALSOBROOKS (for herself and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend section 485 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require certain institutions of higher education to develop and implement a venue-specific heat-related illnesses emergency action plan, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Jordan McNair Stu-
5 dent Athlete Heat Fatality Prevention Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Heat-related illnesses are a serious medical
2 condition that result from the body's inability to cool
3 itself down in extremely hot environments. Heat-re-
4 lated illnesses include heat stroke, heat exhaustion,
5 heat cramps, heat syncope, heat rash, and muscle
6 breakdown. When experiencing heat illness, patients
7 may exhibit an array of symptoms including confu-
8 sion, slurred speech, unconsciousness, vomiting, sei-
9 zures, fatigue, elevated body temperature, fainting,
10 dizziness, or muscle pain.

11 (2) The Centers for Disease Control and Pre-
12 vention reported over 700 heat-related deaths in the
13 United States from 2004 to 2018. Heat is the lead-
14 ing climate-related cause of deaths, and rising tem-
15 peratures pose a serious risk to student athletes par-
16 ticipating in outdoor sports.

17 (3) Jordan McNair, a highly accomplished high
18 school football player from Maryland, received schol-
19 arship offers from many competitive university foot-
20 ball programs. He chose to continue his athletic and
21 academic career at the University of Maryland.

22 (4) On May 29, 2018, Jordan McNair collapsed
23 during a workout on the University of Maryland's
24 football field in the 81 degrees Fahrenheit heat.
25 McNair was suffering from exertional heatstroke

1 and was unable to remain in an upright position
2 without assistance from his teammates, medical
3 staff, or coaching staff.

4 (5) Despite being a student athlete at a well-
5 funded division I university, Jordan McNair received
6 inadequate heat-related illness treatment once he
7 was escorted off the field and into the athletic train-
8 ing room. Because medical staff were unable to re-
9 verse McNair's core body temperature, the illness es-
10 calated to a seizure and respiratory distress.

11 (6) Most medical professionals advise patients
12 to receive treatment within 30 minutes of initial heat
13 illness symptoms. More than 90 minutes passed
14 from the time McNair displayed initial symptoms of
15 exertional heatstroke to the time he finally received
16 adequate care from the nearest hospital.

17 (7) By the time Jordan McNair arrived at the
18 hospital, his core body temperature had reached a
19 life-threatening temperature of 106 degrees Fahr-
20 enheit.

21 (8) On June 13, 2018, two weeks after col-
22 lapsing on the football field at practice, Jordan
23 McNair died from symptoms of exertional heat-
24 stroke.

1 (9) Two extensive external investigations of the
2 University of Maryland’s football program concluded
3 that the program’s medical staff failed to promptly
4 intervene, diagnose, and treat Jordan McNair’s exer-
5 tional heatstroke symptoms.

6 (10) According to an independent medical re-
7 port, University of Maryland staff failed to assess
8 Jordan McNair’s vitals, recognize and monitor heat-
9 related illness symptoms, provide adequate cooling
10 devices and respiratory aids, and generate an emer-
11 gency plan to coordinate with emergency responders.

12 (11) The University of Maryland has taken sig-
13 nificant steps to prevent and treat heat-related inju-
14 ries among their student athletes, making cold water
15 immersion tubs available at every practice and game,
16 installing and maintaining readily accessible auto-
17 matic defibrillators at every venue, and increasing
18 the training and reporting structure of athletic
19 trainers, among other reforms in line with the prior-
20 ities of this Act.

21 (12) The McNair family is devoted to honoring
22 Jordan’s legacy and founded the Jordan McNair
23 Foundation, which provides an educational tool to
24 help coaches, student athletes, and parents identify
25 symptoms of heatstroke and heat-related illnesses.

1 (13) Heat-related illnesses and fatalities are
 2 preventable if caught early. Medical staff, coaches,
 3 and athletes must be knowledgeable of the warning
 4 signs for heat-related illness in order to protect stu-
 5 dent athletes from injury and even death.

6 **SEC. 3. VENUE-SPECIFIC HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES EMER-**
 7 **GENCY ACTION PLAN REQUIREMENT FOR IN-**
 8 **STITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

9 Section 485 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
 10 U.S.C. 1092) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 11 lowing:

12 “(n) VENUE-SPECIFIC HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES
 13 EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each institution of higher
 15 education that is participating in any program under
 16 this title and that is a member of an athletic asso-
 17 ciation or athletic conference shall—

18 “(A) not later than 1 year after the date
 19 of enactment of this subsection and in consulta-
 20 tion with local emergency responders, develop
 21 and implement a venue-specific heat-related ill-
 22 nesses emergency action plan, which shall in-
 23 clude a plan for the operation and use of auto-
 24 matic external defibrillators and cold water im-
 25 mersion equipment; and

“(B) not later than 1 year after the date on which such emergency action plan is first implemented, and on an annual basis thereafter, submit to the Secretary and authorizing committees a report that demonstrates compliance with the requirements of this subsection with respect to the preceding year.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—An emergency action plan developed and implemented under paragraph (1), with respect to an institution of higher education, shall—

“(A) include a symptom identification structure and a coordination of care plan for student athletes exhibiting signs of heat-related illness, and be visibly posted in each—

“(i) locker room;

“(ii) athletic training facility;

“(iii) weight room; and

“(iv) outdoor sports complex and stadium;

“(B) be made available on the athletic program website or public website of the institution of higher education at the beginning of each academic year;

1 “(C) be distributed to local emergency re-
 2 sponders; and

3 “(D) before the start of practical training
 4 for each academic year, be distributed to, and
 5 practiced in-person by, all of the following indi-
 6 viduals at the institution of higher education:

7 “(i) Student athletes.

8 “(ii) Certified athletic trainers.

9 “(iii) Team physicians.

10 “(iv) Athletic training students.

11 “(v) Athletic administrators.

12 “(vi) Coaches.

13 “(vii) Institutional safety personnel.

14 “(viii) Legal counsel.

15 “(3) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In developing an
 16 emergency action plan under paragraph (1), an in-
 17 stitution of higher education shall consider—

18 “(A) including guidelines by the Wet-Bulb
 19 Globe Temperature index to assess environ-
 20 mental conditions and heat stress prevention for
 21 student athletes;

22 “(B) having a readily accessible and prop-
 23 erly maintained automatic external defibrillator
 24 within 3 minutes of each sporting venue; and

1 “(C) including the locations of each auto-
 2 matic external defibrillator in such plan.

3 “(4) AUTHORIZED ADJUSTMENTS.—In the case
 4 of a facility described in paragraph (2)(A) that is
 5 undergoing a major physical alteration that would
 6 affect the implementation of a requirement of para-
 7 graph (2), such requirement may be adjusted with
 8 respect to such facility.”.

9 **SEC. 4. VENUE-SPECIFIC HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES EMER-**
 10 **GENCY ACTION PLAN REQUIREMENT FOR**
 11 **SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

12 Subpart 2 of part F of title VIII of the Elementary
 13 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7901
 14 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

15 **“SEC. 8549D. VENUE-SPECIFIC HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES**
 16 **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN REQUIREMENT**
 17 **FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

18 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Each secondary school that re-
 19 ceives Federal funds under this Act and that has a student
 20 athletics program shall, as a condition of receiving such
 21 funds—

22 “(1) not later than 1 year after the date of en-
 23 actment of this subsection and in consultation with
 24 local emergency responders, develop and implement
 25 a venue-specific heat-related illnesses emergency ac-

tion plan, which shall include a plan for the operation and use of automatic external defibrillators and cold water immersion equipment; and

“(2) not later than 1 year after the date on which such emergency action plan is first implemented, and on an annual basis thereafter, submit to the Secretary and authorizing committees a report that demonstrates compliance with the requirements of this subsection with respect to the preceding year.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—An emergency action plan developed and implemented under subsection (a), with respect to a secondary school, shall—

“(1) include a symptom identification structure and a coordination of care plan for student athletes exhibiting signs of heat-related illness, and be visibly posted in each—

“(A) locker room;

“(B) athletic training facility;

“(C) weight room; and

“(D) outdoor sports complex and stadium;

“(2) be made available on the athletic program website or public website of the secondary school at the beginning of each academic year;

1 “(3) be distributed to local emergency respond-
2 ers; and

3 “(4) before the start of practical training for
4 each academic year, be distributed to, and practiced
5 in-person by, all of the following individuals at the
6 secondary school:

7 “(A) Student athletes.

8 “(B) Certified athletic trainers.

9 “(C) Team physicians.

10 “(D) Athletic training students.

11 “(E) Athletic administrators.

12 “(F) Coaches.

13 “(G) Institutional safety personnel.

14 “(H) Legal counsel.

15 “(I) Any other individuals determined to
16 be relevant by the secondary school.

17 “(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In developing an emer-
18 gency action plan under subsection (a), a secondary school
19 shall consider—

20 “(1) including guidelines by the Wet-Bulb
21 Globe Temperature index to assess environmental
22 conditions and heat stress prevention for student
23 athletes;

1 “(2) having a readily accessible and properly
2 maintained automatic external defibrillator within 3
3 minutes of each sporting venue; and

4 “(3) including the locations of each automatic
5 external defibrillator in such plan.

6 “(d) AUTHORIZED ADJUSTMENTS.—In the case of a
7 facility described in subsection (b)(1) that is undergoing
8 a major physical alteration that would affect the imple-
9 mentation of a requirement of subsection (b), such re-
10 quirement may be adjusted with respect to such facility.”.

11 **SEC. 5. PROMOTION OF FEDERAL GRANTS RELATED TO**
12 **HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES PREVENTION.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education shall
14 inform secondary schools, local educational agencies, State
15 educational agencies, and institutions of higher education
16 about Federal funds available—

17 (1) to assist with preventing students and fac-
18 ulty from suffering from heat-related illnesses;

19 (2) to develop heat-related illness prevention
20 training; and

21 (3) to acquire equipment for treating heat-re-
22 lated illnesses for students and faculty.

23 (b) ESEA TERMS.—In this section, the terms “insti-
24 tution of higher education”, “local educational agency”,
25 “secondary school”, and “State educational agency” have

1 the meanings given those terms in section 8101 of the Ele-
2 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
3 7801).

○