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- Mike Nozzolio, New York State Senator

Law passed to protect students

New York State Senator Mike Nozzolio announced that Governor Cuomo has signed into law legislation (S.3953) he co-sponsored and fought to enact that establishes guidelines for coaches, teachers and other school personnel to protect students from concussions and traumatic brain injuries.

"School athletic programs, intramural sports and physical education classes are an important part of the educational experience at every school district in our State. It is important that we make this experience as safe as possible for our student athletes and ensure that every school is prepared to treat and monitor concussions and other brain injuries," said Senator Nozzolio. "This legislation is critical in reducing the risk of these injuries causing long-term damage and will encourage parents, students and coaches to take preventative steps to avoid serious head injury."

Senator Nozzolio worked closely with

local activist Ray Ciancaglini of Romulus as he fought to enact the legislation, known as the Concussion Management Awareness Act, and raise awareness of the dangers head injuries pose to young student athletes. Ray, a former boxer, has created a website to share information on Second Impact Syndrome, where an athlete who has already sustained a concussion receives a second head injury before symptoms from the first injury have resolved. For more information visit www.thesecondimpact.com.

"Ray has done outstanding work in educating students and adults alike on the serious repercussions of coming back too soon after a head injury, and his efforts have made a difference in the lives of young athletes across our State," said Senator Nozzolio. "Ray's support and encouragement was invaluable as I fought for this legislation to ensure that coaches, trainers and others are properly prepared to handle mild traumatic brain

injuries before they become severe or life-threatening."

The Concussion Management Awareness Act prohibits any student who may have suffered a concussion from participating in athletic activities until they have gone twenty-four hours without showing symptoms and have been authorized to return by a licensed physician. It also requires coaches, teachers and other school personnel to be trained about the symptoms of mild traumatic brain injuries and the importance of proper medical treatment.

In addition, the State Education Department, the Department of Health and local school districts will be required to post information on their websites for parents and students about how brain injuries occur, the signs and symptoms of such injuries and guidelines about returning to school, physical education classes and sports after an injury.

- Submitted article