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Soccer parents kicking and screaming over rules

By Jack Lavelle, Capital News Service
01/25/2006

RICHMOND -- Tweeeet! That's gotta be a foul! The Virginia Youth Soccer Association is encouraging all coaches, volunteers and parents to rush the field to stop a law proposed by Delegate Robert Hull (D-Fairfax.)

Hull has proposed giving homeowners living near public and private athletic fields and swimming pools the right to determine whether organized sports can be played there at certain times.

House Bill 1368, known as the Home Serenity and Tranquility Act, would prohibit activities all day on Sundays and before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m. on other days. Exceptions would be made only with the unanimous consent of nearby residents.

Under Hull's measure, a team or league that wants to use a facility would have to compile a list of the games and events to be held there. The list would be given to people living within 65 yards of the sporting facility -- and they'd all have to agree to allow the games to begin.

An athletic field or swimming pool that breaks the proposed law could be fined \$500 for the first violation and \$750 for subsequent violations.

The bill has been referred to the House Courts of Justice Committee.

The Virginia Youth Soccer Association is mobilizing opposition to Hull's legislation.

"Passage of this bill has the potential to limit Travel League play and all tournaments," the group's call to action says.

"A high percentage of soccer fields are adjacent to homes. One home owner objecting to Sunday play will be able to shut down the field."

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