

1 By Supervisors Rolland, Vincent, O'Connor,
2 Gómez-Tom, Eckblad, Martin, Johnson, Jr.,
3 Capriolo, Shea, Coggs-Jones, and Martinez
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File No. 25-575

6 **A RESOLUTION**
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8 Urging the Board of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) to
9 acknowledge a gap in policies and training that has allowed incidents of hate speech
10 and harassment in regular season games to go unaddressed, and recommending the
11 development of protocols to improve protection for student-athletes in the future
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14 WHEREAS, participation in organized athletics contributes to the physical health,
15 academic success and personal development of students; and
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17 WHEREAS, an estimated 85,000 to 90,000 high school students in Wisconsin
18 participate in interscholastic athletics each year, including thousands of participants in
19 Milwaukee County; and
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21 WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) is a
22 private nonprofit organization whose mission is to organize, develop, and operate
23 interscholastic athletics programs for its member schools; and
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25 WHEREAS, the purpose of the WIAA is, in part, "to emphasize interscholastic
26 athletics as a partner with other school activities in the total education process, and to
27 formulate and maintain policies that will cultivate the high ideals of good citizenship and
28 sportsmanship;" and
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30 WHEREAS, the WIAA has adopted "Tournament Harassment Policies and
31 Procedures" that specify: "The membership disapproves of any form of taunting or
32 expression that is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, disrespect or demean
33 others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or
34 national origin;" and
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36 WHEREAS, while tournament policies provide a protocol for officials to respond
37 to acts of harassment during tournament competition, conduct during regular season
38 games is the responsibility of the individual participating schools; and
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40 WHEREAS, there have been multiple recent incidents at regular season games
41 involving Milwaukee and Wauwatosa students in which officials failed to take immediate

42 action in response to harassment and hate speech, even when an official in one of the
43 incidents acknowledged having witnessed the activity; and

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45 WHEREAS, harassment and hate speech can have severe negative impacts on
46 the mental health, well-being and academic performance of student-athletes; and

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48 WHEREAS, comprehensive policies and training for officials are essential to
49 ensure that they are equipped to handle incidents of hate speech and harassment
50 promptly and effectively; and

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52 WHEREAS, protecting the welfare and dignity of student-athletes is a shared
53 responsibility that requires clear and consistent protocols; and

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55 WHEREAS, the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, at its meeting of
56 September 5, 2025, recommended adoption of File No. 25-575 (vote 4-0); now,
57 therefore,

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59 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of the WIAA is urged to recognize the
60 enforcement gap that has allowed incidents of harassment and hate speech to go
61 unaddressed; and

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63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
64 strongly encourages the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) to
65 extend its tournament harassment protocols to all regular season games, and to require
66 statewide training for all licensed officials on how to respond to hate speech and
67 harassment; and

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69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Office of Government
70 Affairs is requested to communicate the contents of this resolution to the leadership of
71 the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, with the recommendation that they include
72 this policy recommendation in their legislative agenda; and

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74 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Milwaukee County Office of Government
75 Affairs is further requested to communicate the contents of this resolution to the
76 members of the Board of the WIAA.

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