

# Testimony in Favor of HB 1185

To Whom it May Concern,

My Name is Elwood Townsend. I'm the current Head Football Coach at Northeast High School in Pasadena, MD.

Today, I write to each of you in support of House Bill 1185. This bill would allow student-athletes who are seniors to reclassify and play another year of high school athletics.

Reclassifying is an academic improvement opportunity. Another year also means another chance to sharpen study habits or take a course over to improve academically. Even a slightly higher GPA can boost the quantity and quality of college recruiting opportunities.

While being a part of a global pandemic is most certainly unprecedented, these students-athletes have lost more than that of their peers who does not participate in sports. Athletic seasons are opportunities to gain valuable exposure for college recruitment and missing athletic seasons have put many behind the curve.

It's a year of getting bigger, better, and wiser. As we all know, the teenage years are a time of transition. For example, it's not uncommon for a teen to grow several inches in height in a few short months. So, imagine what an extra year of development could mean for a student-athlete. It could mean putting on more height, muscle mass or weight, in addition to becoming more experienced and better at their sport. That size and experience is something that's going to show up when coaches review highlight video.

Lastly, It should be noted the NCAA approves of reclassifying provided all its rules governing the process are followed.

I thank you for your time and consideration of this proposed bill.

Sincerely,

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Position: In Favor