

OUTSIDE *the box*

WITH CAM SMITH



FOOTBALL

Texas close to becoming first state to mandate EKG heart screenings for high school athletes

By **Cam Smith, USA TODAY High School Sports** April 14, 2015

 315 SHARES

 SHARE

 TWEET

 EMAIL



The lobbying efforts of Scott Stephens, who lost his football-playing son to a sudden cardiac incident, may lead Texas to become the first state requiring student athletes to take an EKG — YouTube screen shot

Texas moved a significant step forward in its quest to become the first state to require all prospective high school athletes to undergo an electrocardiogram heart test before participating in high school athletics when the Texas House of Representatives passed a bill that would require all rising freshmen and juniors to undergo an EKG while being given a physical to participate in interscholastic sports.

If the bill is passed by the Texas State Senate and becomes law, **the Lone Star State would become the first in the nation to require all student athletes to undergo a full EKG** before participating in varsity sports.

As reported by the Dallas Morning News, the bill was introduced by Baytown Republican Wayne Smith, but has received wide bi-partisan support. **It was tentatively approved by a vote of 86-57**, but will be voted on again before it moves on to the Senate for ratification.

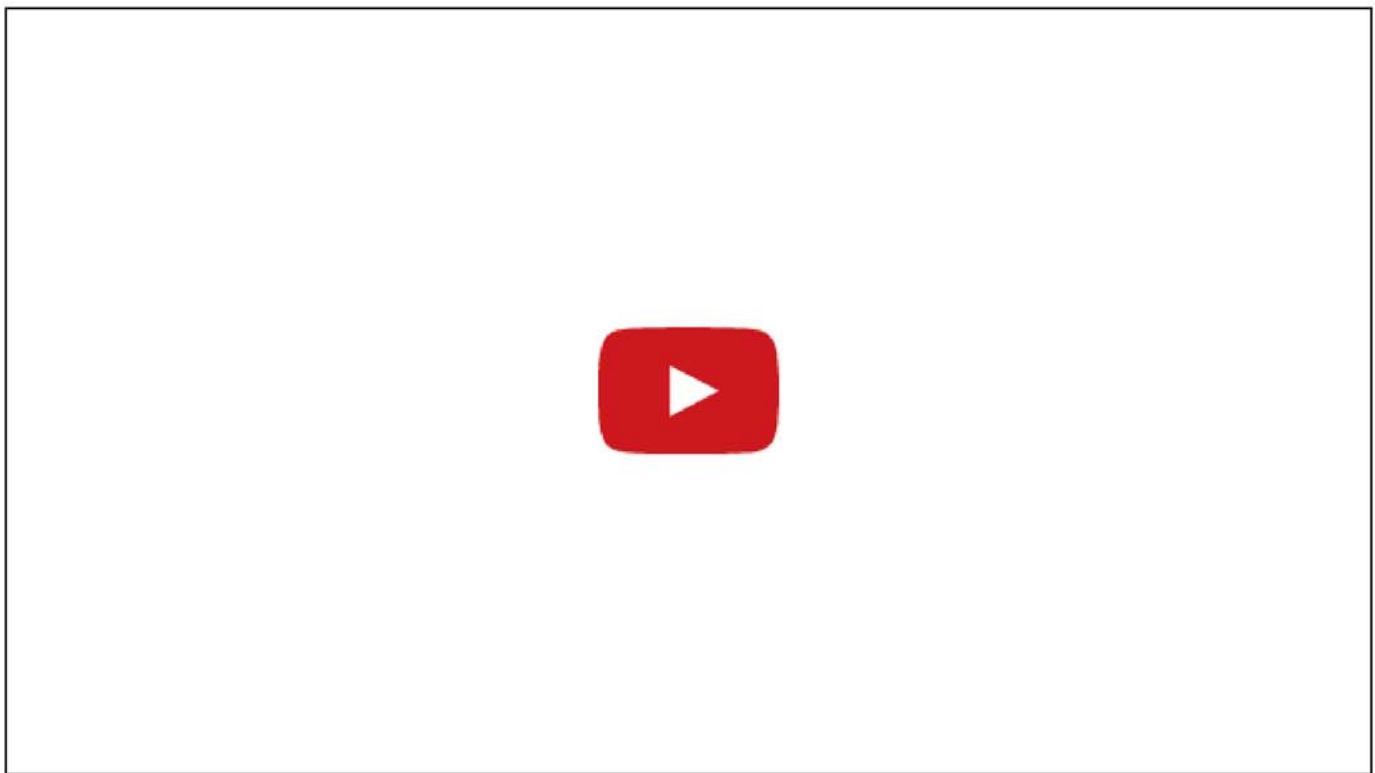
One of the primary drivers for the legislation is Scott Stephens, the father of the late Cody Stephens, who died in 2012 in his sleep at home. The elder Stephens initially campaigned for the University Interscholastic League, the governing body for sports in Texas, to require heart screenings, but was met with significant resistance from UIL's Medical

Advisory Committee. In turn, that rejection sent Stephens to the state legislature, where he has met with more success in finding sympathetic ears for the measure.

While there are valid financial concerns about requiring all students to have an EKG, the data that Stephens has provided relative to the number of positive tests in those conducted by the **Cody Stephens Go Big or Go Home Foundation** indicate that there are a significant number of Texas teenagers who could be at risk of a sudden cardiac incident while competing in varsity sports.



Cody Stephens, who died of a sudden cardiac event in 2012 — YouTube screen shot



“We found 17 kids out of 15,000,” **Stephens told the Morning News**. “If there’s a million kids in the state of Texas getting a physical, that tells me – just by the math – that there’s 1,000 kids out there that are possible candidates for sudden cardiac arrest.”

“I can’t sleep at night knowing that I didn’t do everything I could do to not let that happen.”



Cody Stephens, EKG, Heart attack, Heart condition, Heart failure, Texas, Tragic, UIL, Outside The Box

➔ | 315 SHARES

f | SHARE

🐦 | TWEET

✉ | EMAIL

RELATED **NEWS**

NEWS

Three football-related deaths in four days should not be business as usual

NEWS

Concussion lawsuit filed against Illinois High School Association

TEXAS

Allen's success based on massive football tryout numbers

0 COMMENTS

SIGN IN

- **livefyre** 🔥

2 people listening

