

Louisiana bill would implement punishments for threatening officials

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Threatening high school sports referees and officials could be punishable by fines and even jail time if a proposed Louisiana bill is passed.

HB 184 would aim to stem the amount of harassment toward officials at sporting events, according to [WDSU](#).

Joey Cabercerias, who is a parent and coach in the area, told the

outlet parents often have threatening tones when disagreeing with a referee at a sporting event.

"It's at an epidemic level at all the stuff we go to," he said.

Police would make the judgement call of whether citations and/or arrests are necessary, according to the outlet.

This bill seems to be a long time coming and has widespread support. WDSU reported that there was no opposition in the government to the bill as of Friday.

The Louisiana High School Athletic Association has already sent a memo that called upon parents to "cool it" with the harassment and threats against referees, according to the outlet.

Rep. Cameron Henry (R-Metairie) told the outlet the bill is "unfortunate" but necessary.

"The problem we're having is a lot of parents and guardians are starting to scream and threaten referees at 10-year old T-ball games," he said. "It's embarrassing for the kid and parents and isn't what sports are about."

Louisiana is not the only state that has had issues recently with violence and threats against officials.

In April, a [referee suffered a broken collarbone and concussion](#) after a youth basketball coach allegedly struck him during a disagreement.

[Wisconsin released a memo](#) in January warning parents to stop verbal abuse because there is a referee shortage with officials quitting.

A Cincinnati Enquirer column published about a week later noted that [75 percent of high school officials who quit say "adult behavior" is the primary reason](#) they stopped reffing games. Eighty percent of young officials stop after two years, according to the National Association of Sports Officials