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January 17, 2006

Dear Athletic Director:

I am writing to inform you that bill A2162, also known as the Fairness in Competition Bill, has been amended.

The amended bill (A2162a) contains all of the provisions in the original bill but narrows the scope of the legislation to individual sports not covered by the NYSPHAA's five classification system used for state championship events. Furthermore, the legislation also exempts those individual sports that use a statewide qualifying standard such as time or distance. The remaining sports are the sports most seriously affected by the current NYSPHSA policies governing state championship events.

In these sports, athletes are not given at least a similar opportunity to qualify for state championship events. As you know, each section sends the same number of qualifiers to state championship events regardless of the number of competitors in the section. The size disparity in these particular sports is most severe of all in the NYSPHSA - one section could have 25 times more competitors than another section. While this is bad enough for sports like tennis, golf, bowling and gymnastics, it is even worse for wrestling. Unlike other individual sports which send multiple-entries to the state championship event, wrestling is limited to advancing just one entry from division 1 and division 2 to the state tournament. I am sure that you would agree that this policy violates the principle of "fairness" that should be present in all scholastic athletic events.

A2612a would require multiple entry format based on proportionality for state qualifying events for those individual sports where the NYSPHSA five tier school population classification system or statewide qualifying standard (time or distance) is not currently employed

As stated in my letter to Athletic Directors and School Superintendents last January should the NYSPHSA take meaningful corrective action on their own, this legislation would no longer be necessary.

On a related matter, I am aware of the recent action taken by the NYSPHAA wrestling committee regarding the New York State Tournament. The committee's recommendation to institute a wildcard system to select additional state tournament entries while interesting is not a

remedy for the inherent unfairness in the current system. Further I was disappointed to learn that members of the committee are being advised not to recommend more meaningful reform to avoid a veto from the NYSPHSAA Championship and Executive committees.

Warmest personal regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Morelle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Assembly
Chairman, Assembly Committee on
Tourism, Arts and Sports Development