



SPONSOR: Sen. Sokola on behalf of all Senators  
Rep. Baumbach, on behalf of all Representatives

DELAWARE STATE SENATE  
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 76

RECOMMENDING THAT SCHOOLS BE EDUCATED ON THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF HEAVY BACKPACKS.

1           WHEREAS, overloaded school backpacks contribute to the problem of back pain and spinal strain for students  
2 across the nation; and

3           WHEREAS, overweight backpacks are a source of repeated low-level stress that may result in chronic neck,  
4 shoulder, or back pain in children; and

5           WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 7,000 emergency room visits  
6 each year are due to backpack-related injuries; and

7           WHEREAS, the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons surveyed physicians from Alfred I. DuPont Hospital  
8 for Children in Wilmington, Delaware and found that 58% of the orthopedists reported treating patients for back and  
9 shoulder pain caused by heavy backpacks; and

10           WHEREAS, studies have shown heavy loads carried on the back have the potential to damage the soft tissues of  
11 the shoulder, causing microstructural damage to the nerves and damage to internal organs; and

12           WHEREAS, children, who are made to carry heavy textbooks, now have to carry computers, cell phones, water  
13 bottles, running shoes, band instruments, and other equipment; and

14           WHEREAS, more than ninety percent of students carry backpacks, which have been found to weigh as much as  
15 twenty-five percent of the child's body weight; and

16           WHEREAS, The Nemours Foundation recommends that children carry backpacks that are no more than ten to  
17 fifteen percent of their body weight; and

18           WHEREAS, children should also use both straps and avoid using backpacks that have only one strap, as they are  
19 not as effective at distributing weight and may strain muscles; and

20           NOW, THEREFORE:

21 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 148th General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of  
22 Representatives concurring therein, that school administrators, teachers, parents, and students should be educated about the  
23 potential health impact of heavy backpacks and take proactive measures to avoid injury; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that schools should work with their PTA/PTO to assess the extent to which  
25 students use overweight backpacks and to promote innovative homework strategies, lessening the need to take all school  
26 materials and books back and forth each day.

SYNOPSIS

This Resolution recommends that schools be educated on the health impacts of heavy backpacks and work on innovative strategies to reduce that impact.

Author: Senator Sokola