

Rep. Heise offered the following resolution:

**House Resolution No. 251.**

A resolution to urge the Michigan High School Athletic Association to adopt a maximum age eligibility waiver for students with disabilities.

Whereas, Currently, the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) age eligibility rules specify that high school athletes must be less than 19 years of age, but those who turn 19 on or after September 1 remain eligible for that school year. Some high school athletes face circumstances whereby participation in sports would be unfairly limited. Students with intellectual or physical disabilities may have started their education later than most and some students may have repeated an early grade at the recommendation of education professionals for academic reasons. These student athletes may turn 19 while still in high school and not be allowed to participate in athletic endeavors that could be beneficial to their confidence, character development, and physical well-being; and

Whereas, Twenty-three other states have policies that allow high school athletes with certain disabilities or conditions to be exempted from athletic age eligibility rules. These states recognize that circumstances or conditions may intrude on an otherwise eligible athlete's ability to meet age restrictions. High school sports should be about much more than the final score. It should be about helping athletes reach their potential by being part of a team and promoting participation and contributions by all; and

Whereas, Clearly, it is important to prevent abuse of age restriction exemptions for competitive advantage. However, the MHSAA should promote healthy and fair athletic participation for all students by adopting waivers for those students with disabilities, as defined by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. Changing this rule would allow a few deserving students who have endured the hardship of physical or intellectual disabilities early in life to play a full four years of high school sports; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the Michigan High School Athletic Association to adopt a maximum age eligibility waiver for students with disabilities; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Michigan High School Athletic Association Representative Council.