MAKE-A-LAW! PROGRAM
3rd through 8th Grade Curriculum

This curriculum guide is designed to provide students with insight into the legislative process by placing them into the role of legislators debating a bill. The bill provided in this lesson, Senate Bill No.1817 “Steven’s Law”, is a bill that was re-introduced in the 218th New Jersey Legislative Session.

OBJECTIVES
At the completion of this program, students will:
- Understand that debate, negotiation, and compromise are central to the democratic and legislative process;
- Know the process by which a bill becomes a law in the State of New Jersey;
- Have a deeper understanding of the concept of representative democracy.

RELEVANT EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS
The New Jersey State House Make-A-Law! program contributes to the following NJ Cumulative Progress Indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPI #</th>
<th>Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3.5.CivicsPD.2</td>
<td>Use a variety of sources and data to identify the various perspectives and actions taken by individuals involving a current or historical community, state, or national issue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.3.5.CivicsPD.3</td>
<td>Propose a solution to a local issue after considering evidence and the perspectives of different groups, including community members and local officials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.1.8.CivicsPD.2</td>
<td>Propose and defend a position regarding a public policy issue at the appropriate local, state, or national level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.1.8.CivicsPD.5</td>
<td>Construct a claim as to why it is important for democracy that individuals be informed by facts, aware of diverse viewpoints, and willing to take action on public issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.1.8.CivicsPR.5</td>
<td>Engage in simulated democratic processes (e.g., legislative hearings, judicial proceedings, elections) to understand how conflicting points of view are addressed in a democratic society.</td>
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FORMAT
This 30-minute lesson is designed to encourage student discussion, debate, and participation. The students—not the facilitator—guide the program through their commentary and debate. We encourage facilitators to introduce the program, moderate the experience, and make sure the program stays on task and on time, but the students should dominate the discussion.

PROGRAM OUTLINE
- Introduction to the branches of government and Legislature (5 minutes)
- First vote activity (3 minutes)
- Identification of participant roles (3 minutes)
- Swearing in/Oath of Office (2 minutes)
- Bill introduction (2 minutes)
- Debating Senate Bill No. 1817 “Steven’s Law” (10 minutes)
- Senate vote (2 minutes)
- The final bill process (3 minutes)

VOCABULARY
Throughout the lesson key vocabulary that should be reinforced are listed in bold type:

- Legislative Branch
- Executive Branch
- Judicial Branch
- Law
- Bill
- Debate
- Negotiation

- Compromise
- Legislative Process
- Simple Majority
- Senate
- General Assembly
- Constituent
- Lobbyist

MATERIALS
To enhance this interactive activity, we encourage the use of the following materials, but the lesson can be taught using only the materials located on pages 10-22 in this guide.
- Paper
- Pen or Pencil
- Gavel
- Copies of Senate Bill No. 1817 (pages 11-13)
- Copies of constituent letters (pages 14-17)
BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATURE (5 MINUTES)

During this activity, we're going to look at the process of making laws in the State of New Jersey from the perspective of a legislator. We encourage open-ended questions for effective student engagement.

— What do legislators do?

Legislators make laws. While anyone can have an idea for a bill, only a legislator can sponsor a bill to become a law.

— What is a law?

Laws are a set of rules of conduct created by government. They provide order, fairness, safety, and community improvements.

— What is the name of the document that presents an idea for a law?

A bill. Bills can only be written by legislators, but the idea for a bill can come from anyone: legislators, interest groups, the Governor, and citizens including you!

— Who else is involved with the law-making process?

In New Jersey, and in the United States, government is divided into three equal branches, all of which deal with laws in some way. Having three branches instead of one makes sure that no one branch is stronger than the other. We call this a system of checks and balances.

Legislative: Makes the laws (New Jersey Senators and General Assembly members)

Executive: Enforces the laws (Chief Executive of New Jersey is the Governor)

Judicial: Interprets the laws (Judges)

— In the New Jersey Legislature there are two houses:

The upper house is called the Senate. There are 40 Senators, one from each of the 40 legislative districts in New Jersey. Each Senator represents approximately 220,000 people in their district. Senators typically serve four-year terms.

The lower house is called the General Assembly. There are 80 General Assembly members, two from each of the 40 legislative districts in New Jersey. Each General Assembly member represents approximately 220,000 people in their district. General Assembly members serve two-year terms.

— How do bills become laws?

Both houses of the Legislature must pass a bill by a simple majority vote. A simple majority is half of the total number of legislators, plus one.

Senate: 40 members ÷ 2 + 1 = 21 votes for a simple majority

General Assembly: 80 members ÷ 2 + 1 = 41 votes for a simple majority

A bill must have a simple majority in both houses, and must be passed with the same language in the bill. If the bill passes, it is sent to the Governor who decides whether or not to sign the bill into law. A bill cannot become a law without the Governor’s signature.
— How do we decide who our legislators are?

We vote! The citizens of New Jersey are the “boss” of the legislators. We can vote for them if we like their ideas and how they do their job. We can decide to not vote for them if we don’t like how they perform as legislators.

— What are the qualifications to become a New Jersey legislator?

Not just anyone can be a member of the Senate or General Assembly. You need to meet certain requirements:

Senate Requirements:

— 30 years old
— United States citizen
— Resident of New Jersey for four years
— Resident of the district you’d like to represent for one year.

General Assembly Requirements:

— 21 years old
— United States citizen
— Resident of New Jersey for two years
— Resident of the district you’d like to represent for one year.

— What qualities make a good legislator?

Kindness, honesty, good listener, intelligence, ability to see other people’s points of view.

FIRST VOTE ACTIVITY (3 MINUTES)

Before we put your students into the role of a New Jersey Senator, let’s test their skills! Making laws in a democracy is difficult. Even if we all agree that something is a problem, we may not all agree on the solution. For this activity have your students cast their vote:

— What’s your favorite ice cream flavor: Vanilla or Chocolate?

Why do you think that flavor should be chosen? Why can’t we all agree on what flavor is best? The discussion about which flavor is the best and why is an example of debate.

While we may not all be able to agree on which flavor is the best, could we accept other viewpoints and consider other ideas to reach an agreement? We call this process negotiation.

If we were able to negotiate enough to find something that appeases both sides, like vanilla/chocolate swirl ice cream, then we have reached a compromise.

The act of debating, negotiating, compromising, and voting is the legislative process.
PARTICIPANT ROLES (3 MINUTES)
We are going to place your students in the role of legislators, but first let’s talk about who they would encounter at a New Jersey Senate session.

— THE PUBLIC GALLERY

The citizens that the Senators represent are called constituents. During a legislative session, constituents sit in the public gallery—a balcony that overlooks the chamber floor. Citizens in the public gallery are not allowed to speak during a session, but they can speak about a bill earlier in the legislative process as legislators debate bills in what are called committee hearings or committee meetings. Members of the press, executive branch, and lobbyists (people whose business it is to try and influence public policy, lawmaking, and government decisions) may also sit in the public gallery.

— THE FLOOR

The area below the public gallery is called the floor. Legislators sit at individually assigned desks on the chamber floor. There are 80 desks in the General Assembly, and 40 desks in the Senate.

— THE ROSTRUM

The rostrum is a two-tiered platform located at the front of the chamber floor and is where the Senate Secretary and the Senate President work. The lower level of the platform is for the Senate Secretary. The Secretary plays an administrative role and is responsible for taking attendance, announcing the bills, and reporting the vote totals made by the legislators. The Secretary is appointed by the Senate President and is not a legislator.

The upper level of the platform is for the Senate President. The Senate President is voted into position by the other members of the legislative body. They typically are from the majority party, they choose what bills are introduced and voted on in the chamber, and determine the rules for discussing a bill in the chamber.

The students will be playing the roles of New Jersey State Senators, which means they have met the following qualifications:

— 30 years old
— United States citizen
— Resident of New Jersey for four years
— Resident of your legislative district for one year

They represent 220,000 of New Jersey’s nine million residents. They are part-time employees that make $49,500 a year. They have been voted into office by the citizens of their legislative district, their constituents, for a four-year term.
The additional roles in this lesson are: Senate President, Senate Secretary, and Governor. Either multiple adults can participate, or a single facilitator can play multiple roles in the interactive program.

- Senate President: The President will swear in the Senators, monitor the debate, and announce the bill.
- Senate Secretary: The Secretary will read the bill statement, constituent letters, and assist with recording the votes.
- Governor: The Governor will need to make a decision: veto the bill or sign the bill into law.

**SWEARING IN / OATH OF OFFICE (2 MINUTES)**

For students to become Senators, they must first be sworn into office. The facilitator should ask the students to stand, raise their right hand, and repeat the Oath of Office:

“I do solemnly affirm . . .

that I will support the Constitution of the United States . . .

and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey . . .

and that I will faithfully discharge . . .

the duties of a Senator . . .

according to the best of my ability.”

(bang gavel) **CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO THE NEW JERSEY STATE SENATE!**
BILL INTRODUCTION/SENATE BILL NO. 1817 (2 MINUTES)

Introduce the Senators (students) to Senate Bill No. 1817 (pages 11-13). Key areas of the bill are listed below. The only areas that need to be read by the Senate Secretary are the bill and session number (page 11), synopsis (page 11), and statement (page 13):

- Session number: Located on the first page of the bill, the session number (218) references the group of legislators debating the bill.
- Sponsor: The sponsor(s) are the legislators responsible for introducing the bill and its language. The sponsor(s) are identified by the legislative districts and the counties in which their district is located.
- Synopsis: The synopsis is a one or two sentence description of the bill.
- State seal: The New Jersey State seal, featuring Liberty and Prosperity, is located on the front of the bill indicating that is a formal and official document.
- Act and Enacted Sections: These sections of the bill contain detailed legal language indicating who the bill effects, historical and legal precedents that have inspired the creation of the bill, and clarification of language (i.e.: who qualifies as a minor).
- The Statement: The statement is the descriptive text about the bill in non-legal language.

Ask the Secretary to read the bill and session number and synopsis (page 11).

Before the Senate Secretary reads the statement, ask students to think deeply about what this bill will address and what problems might arise if it becomes a law. Remind students that they are not representing themselves as they did in the first vote (ice cream) activity. They are State Senators representing 220,000 New Jerseyans.

Ask the Secretary to read the statement (page 13).

Make sure the students understand the bill: Ask the Senators the WHO, the WHAT, the WHERE, the WHEN, and the WHY of the bill.
THE DEBATE/ SENATE BILL NO. 1817 “STEVEN’S LAW” (10 MINUTES)

Take a preliminary vote: Ask the Senators who would vote for this bill and who would not vote for this bill.

- Choose a Senator who would vote in favor of the bill and appoint them as the sponsor of the bill. Have that Senator explain why they think the bill is a good idea and why their fellow legislators should vote for it.

Moderate the debate:

- Ask the Senators to offer responses to the bill. The Senate President should moderate the debate, restate ideas, and ask questions.

- Language: In actual sessions, the Senate President uses the following phrase to address Senators who stand to speak on a bill, “Senator, do you rise in favor or in opposition to this bill?”

See the bill fact sheet (pages 18-21) and video links (page 10) for resources to help facilitate the debate.

Constituent letters (pages 14-17) should be used by the Senate President to inspire counterarguments to opinions offered by Senators. The letters are the most effective debate tool. There are two letters for those in favor of the bill, and two for those opposed to the bill. The constituent letters can be introduced by asking a Senator if they have visited their district office today to check their mail.

Amendments: Depending on the debate, the bill may be amended. You may find Senators are able to compromise to amend the bill. A simple majority is needed for any amendment to be made to a bill.

SENATE VOTE (2 MINUTES)

Before taking a vote:

- Have the sponsor speak one last time, to try to convince their fellow Legislators to vote for the bill.

- Remind the students of any proposed amendments made to the bill.

The Simple Majority Vote: Review with the students how many votes are needed to pass a bill in the New Jersey General Assembly (41) and Senate (21). Today's vote should be the simple majority of the student Senator body (half + 1). The following phrases are used during voting sessions of the New Jersey Senate:

- Senate President: “All those in favor signify by voting yea (and raise your hand). All those opposed please signify by voting nay (and raise your hand).” The Senate Secretary should record the votes and make sure the total is equal to the number of participating students.

- Senate President: “Are all recorded who wish to be recorded? Properly recorded? Close the machines and take a tally.” This statement refers to the electronic voting boards in the legislative chambers.

- Senate Secretary: “Senate Bill No. 1817 having received # votes in affirmative, # votes in the negative. I declare the bill passed/defeated. Let the bill take the usual course of (passed or vetoed) bills.”
FINIAL BILL PROCESS (3 MINUTES)

— If the bill passes, is it law?
No. First, the bill must go to the other legislative house, the General Assembly, and pass with a simple majority vote. If the bill passes in the General Assembly, then it will be sent to the Governor. If the bill is amended in the General Assembly, it must go back to the Senate for another vote so that everyone is agreeing to the same final language.

— What can the Governor do?
   — Sign the bill and make it a law.
   — Veto the bill unconditionally. (The Legislature can overturn a veto with a 2/3 vote of the membership).
   — Veto the bill conditionally, saying that there needs to be changes made before the Governor will sign it into law. (The Legislature can overturn a veto with a 2/3 vote of the membership).

Designate an adult as the Governor of New Jersey.

— What action will the Governor take? Sign the bill into law or veto the bill? Why?
— What happens if the bill is signed?
It becomes a law.
— What would happen if the bill is not signed into law?
The sponsor of the bill could reintroduce it to the legislature, incorporating some of the previous perspectives they’ve heard, or not reintroduce the bill, effectively ending the path of the bill.

As of April 2020, the bill proposed as “Steven’s Law” has not been signed into law, has not made it to the Governor, and has not been reintroduced by the current legislature.

In this exercise students experienced the job of a lawmaker.

— Was the job of a legislator easy?
Legislators are influenced by a variety of forces: citizens and organizations from their legislative districts, the views of the political party they represent, personal beliefs, other legislators, etc. As students might have experienced, it is difficult to make decisions when considering so many factors. As a result, they must debate the issues, negotiate, and compromise to move legislation forward. These are the same skills that students used in the debate of Senate Bill No. 1817.

Closing Senate session language used by Senate President:
“Having completed the business for the Senate on DAY, MONTH, DATE, YEAR, I declare this session of the Senate closed (bang gavel)”.
SUPPORTING MATERIALS
The following materials should be used to support the Make-A-Law! Program. The materials will help facilitators and students navigate through the debate process.

SENATE BILL NO. 1817 (PAGES 11-13)
Copy of New Jersey Senate Bill No. 1817

CONSTITUENT LETTERS (PAGES 14-17)
Attached are four letters that respond to potential reactions to Senate Bill No. 1817. The letters are designed to extend the role-playing of the Make-A-Law! Program to include constituents’ views. Facilitators should use the letters to supply counterarguments to students’ reactions throughout the Make-A-Law! Program. The letters can be read directly, or they can be paraphrased depending on the facilitator’s preference. Depending on the audience, you may use as few as one or as many as all of the letters. There is no standard, and the letters should be integrated into the program based upon the students’ discussion.

METAL BAT BAN FACT SHEET (PAGES 18-21)
The fact sheet includes definitions, arguments presented for both sides of the issue, examples of legislation from other states, and the history of the legislation in New Jersey.

YOUTUBE VIDEOS
The following videos are available for your convenience on the NJ State House Tours YouTube Channel:

- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel: https://bit.ly/NJSHvideos
SENATE, No. 1817

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 8, 2018

Sponsored by:
Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.
District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

“Steven’s Law;” prohibits use of non-wood bats in certain organized games.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.
AN ACT prohibiting the use of non-wood bats in certain organized
games, designating the act as "Steven's Law," and supplementing
Title 5 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
of New Jersey:

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:
   a. The hitting of baseballs using non-wood bats may cause a
      baseball to repel off of a bat at a velocity that exceeds the human
      reaction time necessary to perceive the ball and properly react;
   b. While the safety hazard presented by non-wood bats is
difficult to quantify, it is generally agreed that non-wood bats hit
   the ball with greater force than wood bats and present a greater risk
   of injury;
   c. Between 1991 and 2001, 15 players were killed by batted
      balls from bats determined to be made of non-wood aluminum,
      composite, or unknown substances, while only two deaths are
      known to have been caused by bats made from wood;
   d. Steven Domalewski, a 12-year-old pitcher from the Police
      Athletic League in Wayne, New Jersey, was struck in the chest with
      a ball hit by a non-wood bat, and suffered a near-fatal disruption of
      the heart's electrical system that caused his heart to stop, sending
      him into a coma; and
   e. It is necessary and proper for the State to intervene to protect
      the health and safety of its young athletes, and that the benefits
      associated with a reduced risk of death or serious injury outweigh
      the costs associated with replacing non-wood bats with wood bats.

2. As used in this act:
   "Minor" means a person who is less than 18 years of age.
   "Non-wood bat" means any non-wood baseball bat including, but
   not limited to, a bat made of metal, titanium, scandium, aluminum
   or any other alloy compound, but shall not include any wood,
   composite, laminated or composite-coated wood bat that shall be
   approved for play upon verified test data that these bats perform,
   weigh and are balanced like wood bats.
   "Organized game" means any baseball game organized by or
   affiliated with: a public or nonpublic school; any nonprofit youth
   serving organization as defined by section 1 of P.L. 1999, c.432
   (C.15A:3A-1), including but not limited to, Little Leagues, Babe
   Ruth Leagues, Police Athletic Leagues, and the American Legion; a
   county or municipal recreation department; or the governing body
   of a county or municipality.

3. It shall be unlawful to use a non-wood bat in any organized
   game in which minors are participants, excluding those games
   where one of the teams participating in the game is organized by or
affiliated with a school, nonprofit youth organization, county or
municipal recreation department, or governing body of a county or
municipality outside of this State.

The board of education of a school district, the governing board
or chief school administrator of a nonpublic school, the governing
body of a county or municipality, or the governing body of a
nonprofit youth serving organization shall ensure compliance with
the provisions of this act in any organized game it organizes or is
affiliated with, or in which its team participates.

4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh
month after enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill, designated "Steven's Law," prohibits the use of non-
wood bats in organized baseball games in which minors are
participants.

Over the past three to four decades, non-wood bats have almost
completely replaced wood bats in youth and scholastic baseball and
softball leagues. It is generally accepted that non-wood bats hit the
ball with greater force and velocity than wood bats, thereby
reducing the amount of time a defender has to perceive and properly
react to the ball. Therefore, much concern has been raised over the
health and safety risks posed by the widespread use of non-wood
bats, particularly for children. Many young athletes have been
seriously injured and even killed by batted balls that have been hit
with non-wood bats. Steven Domalewski, a 12-year-old pitcher
from the Police Athletic League of Wayne, New Jersey, suffered a
coma after a batted ball from a non-wood bat struck him in the chest
and caused his heart to stop. In the interest of protecting New
Jersey's young athletes from the risk of serious injury imposed by
the use of non-wood bats, this bill prohibits the use of non-wood
bats in any organized game in which minors are participants,
excluding those games where one of the participating teams comes
from outside of this State.

The board of education of a school district, the governing board
or chief school administrator of a nonpublic school, the governing
body of a municipality, or the governing body of a nonprofit youth
serving organization would ensure compliance with the provisions
of this bill in any organized game it sponsors or in which its team
participates.
Dear Senator,

My name is David Rosenthal and I noticed that you are supporting Senate Bill 1817. Please take a moment to consider an opposing view.

In my 15 years of coaching Little League Baseball, I have not noticed an increased danger to my athletes when using metal bats. The following data supports my view. The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System reported 17 deaths identified nationwide from 1991 to 2001 linked to batted balls: eight from metal bats, two from wood bats and seven not known. Eighteen deaths linked to thrown balls occurred over the same period.

All sports pose a risk to players. It is devastating when a death occurs in a sport, but this research proves that banning metal bats from youth baseball will not eliminate the risks of the game.

Thank you for your time, and I hope that my letter has helped to change your view of Senate Bill 1817.

Sincerely,

David Rosenthal
Dear Senator,

My name is Marie Kelley and I read in the local newspaper that you are supporting Senate Bill 1817 because you are concerned about the safety of players.

Metals bats have many benefits; therefore, I do not think it is appropriate to ban them. First, while they are more expensive than wood bats, they last longer. Wood bats can crack and splinter from use and wear. Breakage is rarely a factor with metal bats. In addition, wood bats come from trees and therefore their production puts a strain on the environment. Metal bats do not impose the same environmental consequences.

To address the safety concerns, lawmakers need to put pressure on manufacturers to produce metal bats that perform similarly to wood bats. This approach would ensure that the best qualities of both wood and metal bats are merged into a single option.

For these reasons, I ask you to reconsider your support of Senate Bill 1817.

Sincerely,
Marie Kelley
Use to counterargue a Senator opposing Bill No. 1817

Dear Senator,

My name is Bjorn Sandberg and I am writing to share my support for Senate Bill 1817.

Nearly four years ago, my 16-year old son Gunnar was hit by a line drive ball hit off a metal bat while pitching during a practice baseball game at his high school in San Francisco. The force of the ball was so hard that it left him in a coma for weeks.

My son was lucky to survive. In 2003, a Montana family had to endure the unthinkable when their 18-year-old son Brandon died after being hit in the temple by a similar line drive off a metal bat.

These two stories prove that metal bats are dangerous and need to be eliminated to protect our youth. New York City was the first city to ban metal bats, and North Dakota has become the first state. New Jersey should be the next leader to take a stand and protect their children from the dangers of metal bats.

For these reasons, I ask you to support Senate Bill 1817.

Sincerely,

Bjorn Sandberg
Dear Senator,

My name is Dr. Katherine Peck. I am a school superintendent and I have read that you have spoken out against Senate Bill 1817.

Most people understand that this bill is about the safety of our students who play baseball. Metal bats produce faster speeds and increased force and can lead to serious injury.

Another important issue at hand, however, is cost. Metal bats cost up to $300, while wooden bats are a mere $50. My high school baseball team can have SIX wooden bats for the cost of one metal bat. This is a significant difference, and a meaningful savings for our schools.

Between safety concerns and cost, there are enough reasons to ban metal bats from our youth teams. For these reasons, I ask you to reconsider your opposition of Senate Bill 1817.

Sincerely,
Dr. Katherine Peck
SENATE BILL NO. 1817 FACT SHEETS

Information on the following pages may be integrated into the debate to help encourage discussion and highlight counterarguments.

DEFINITIONS

Non-wood bat: a baseball bat including metal, titanium, scandium, aluminum, or any other alloy compound; does not include wood, composite, laminates or composite-coated wood bat; non-wood bats are hollow in construction.

Wood bats: A bat typically made from ash. Other woods include maple, hickory, and bamboo. Wood bats are solid in construction.

Organized games: any organized game affiliated with a public school, nonpublic school, any nonprofit youth organizations – such as Little League, Babe Ruth Leagues, Police Athletic Leagues, and the American Legion, a county or municipal recreation department, or governing body of a county or municipality.

EXPLORING BOTH SIDES OF SENATE BILL NO. 1817

There are many arguments on either side of this bill. The following are a sample of specific issues that you may raise with students during the Make-a-Law! Program. Please read the constituent letters (pages 14-17) for additional information.

In support of the bill:
- Injuries from baseballs propelled by metal bats are more violent and serious than injuries caused by wood bats. This is due to the “trampoline effect” in which there is a higher bat-to-ball energy transfer in metal bats. When a ball hits a wooden bat, the ball compresses at the instant of impact and loses much of its energy. With a metal bat, the bat can act like a spring or trampoline in driving the ball, which loses less energy. The concern is that faster hits not only make the game harder for the defense but also more dangerous.
- Wood bats cost significantly less than metal bats. On average, for every metal bat purchased, a team can purchase six wood bats. The difference in cost is significant for schools and organizations faced with limited funds. In addition, more bats translate to more participants.
- Baseball is piece of Americana that evokes many strong memories for people. One of the classic associations is the wood bat, with the “crack” sound it produces as the baseball peels off the bat’s barrel. In contrast, metal bats only make a hollow “ping.” Bringing wood bats back to the forefront of youth baseball will return some of the nostalgia to the game.
- Minor and major league baseball teams use wood bats. As the leading organizations for the sport, it is rational that equipment rules in schools and other youth organizations would reflect minor and major league baseball teams.
**In opposition of the bill:**

- A study at Brown University in 2013 indicated that young teen players often are only capable of hitting balls off non-wood bats at wood-like speeds. Of the 3,400 swings evaluated, metal bats did not produce significantly faster speeds than wood bats (Source: [http://news.brown.edu/pressreleases/2013/11/batting](http://news.brown.edu/pressreleases/2013/11/batting)).

- A 2007 Illinois State University study tracked 400 games and 9,000 at-bats and concluded that the difference between injuries from balls hit off wood bats and injuries from balls hit off non-wood bats were statistically insignificant (Source: National Conference of State Legislatures).

- Rather than ban the use of non-wood baseball bats altogether, lawmakers should work to regulate the technology of metal baseball bats used in amateur baseball leagues. Under such legislation, bat companies would be required to manufacture metal bats that perform at wood bat levels.

- To be manufactured, wood bats require the harvesting of trees. As a result, they place a strain on our environment. Metal baseball bats offer a substitute material that does not leave the same environmental footprint.

- If the safety concerns of non-wood baseball bats are that important, then adult recreational organizations and all softball organizations should also be required to use wood bats in their games.

- Like metal baseball bats, wood bats also present safety risks to players. Wood baseball bats can break, and cause splinters and wood pieces to fly at players. These projectiles can be sharp and can cause cuts and lacerations to a player’s body and face.

- The initial cost of metal baseball bats is more than wood bats, but the longevity of non-wood bats is much greater due to their composition. While wood bats can break and splinter after a small amount of use, metal bats can withstand many years of wear and usage.

- Metal bats increase a player’s performance, which presents an advantage for youth players who are hoping to be recruited to play baseball for advanced leagues.

- The statistics that indicate non-wood bats cause greater and more serious injuries than wood bats are skewed because metal bats are the more common type of bat used in youth baseball. If more wood bats were used in the game, there would be an equal or higher percentage of injuries caused by wood bats.

**OTHER LEGISLATION AND POLICY**

**Passed Examples**

- In 2007, New York City became the first city to pass an ordinance banning the use of non-wood (metal) baseball bats in high school baseball games citing the safety of high school athletes as the main concern.

- The North Dakota High School Activities Association board of directors voted in 2007 to make the change from non-wood to wood bats, primarily to prevent injuries and to avoid the effects of cold weather on metal bats. This made North Dakota the first state to implement an all-wood bat policy.
Failed Examples

- Mississippi Senate Bill No. 2194 (2005): Prohibits using non-wood baseball bats in public school league games
- New York Assembly Bill No. 6691 (2007): Prohibits the use of non-wood bats in certain organized baseball and softball games in which minors are participants
- Pennsylvania House Bill No. 1482 (2007): Prohibits the use of non-wooden bats in baseball and softball
- New York Assembly Bill 847 (2009): Prohibits the use of non-wood bats in certain organized baseball and softball games in which minors are participants

HISTORY OF NEW JERSEY SENATE BILL NO. 1817

This bill was first introduced in the New Jersey General Assembly during the 2006 – 2007 legislative session. Assembly Bill No. 3388 prohibited the use of non-wood bats in organized baseball or softball games in which minors are participants. During this session, legislators amended the bill to apply only to organized baseball games. Identical bills introduced in subsequent sessions never included softball in the legislation. Below is the complete legislative history.

2006-2007 Session
A3388
Primary Sponsors: Patrick Diegnan, Jr., Joseph V. Egan, Peter Barnes, Jr., Brian Stack, David C. Russo, Kevin O’Toole

Introduced to Assembly on 6/26/2006
Referred to Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee on 6/26/2006
Reported out of Assembly Committee with Amendments, 2nd Reading on 10/19/2006
Assembly Floor Amendment Passed on 12/11/2006
Assembly Floor Amendment Passed on 1/8/2007
2008-2009 Session
A327
Primary Sponsors: Patrick Diegnan, Jr., Joseph V. Egan, David C. Russo, Valerie Vainieri Huttle
Introduced to Assembly on 1/8/2008
Referred to Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee on 1/8/2008

2010-2011 Session
A396
Primary Sponsors: Patrick Diegnan, Jr., Joseph V. Egan, David C. Russo, Valerie Vainieri Huttle
Co-Sponsors: Frederick Scalera, Thomas Giblin, Joseph Cryan, Vincent Prieto, John Burzichelli, Joan Voss, Albert Coutinho, Scott Rumana, Connie Wagner, Annette Quijano
Introduced to Assembly on 1/12/2010
Referred to Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee on 1/12/2010

2012-2013 Session
A1845
Primary Sponsors: Patrick Diegnan, Jr., Joseph V. Egan, David C. Russo, Valerie Vainieri Huttle
Introduced to Assembly on 1/10/2012
Referred to Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee on 1/10/2012

2014-2015 Session
A1442
Primary Sponsors: Patrick Diegnan, Jr., Joseph V. Egan, David C. Russo, Valerie Vainieri Huttle
Co-Sponsors: Thomas Giblin, Joseph Cryan, Vincent Prieto, John Burzichelli, Scott Rumana, Annette Quijano
 Introduced to Assembly on 1/16/2014
Referred to Assembly Women and Children Committee on 1/16/2014

STATISTICS
The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission’s National Electronic Injury Surveillance System reported 17 deaths identified nationwide from 1991 to 2001 linked to batted balls: eight from non-wood bats, two from wood bats and seven not known. Eighteen deaths linked to thrown balls occurred over the same period. Metal bats can cost between $70 and $300. The most expensive wooden bats sell for about $50.