

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2025

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Manufacturing, and Trade
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and
Trade
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bilirakis and Ranking Member Schakowsky,

We have significant concerns about H.R. 4312, the “Student Compensation and Opportunity through Rights and Endorsements” (SCORE) Act, slated to be marked up by the Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade. The bill appears to be a product of the richest conferences to cement into place the current power structure in college athletics that would leave only the wealthiest schools able to compete at the highest levels of college athletics. The SCORE Act will only cause more chaos and damage to the college athletics system. We urge you to pull this flawed bill from the mark up until the defects are fixed.

First, the bill entrenches the NCAA’s authority at a time when the NCAA’s governance structure is becoming increasingly dominated by wealthier conferences. The SCORE Act hands the NCAA unfettered ability to set rules that would make the rich schools richer, like representation on NCAA championship selection committees—and the tournament revenue that comes with it.

Second, while we are pleased that college athletes can earn a share of the revenue they generate for their schools, the SCORE Act’s formula for determining the size of revenue shared with players will make it difficult for small and mid-sized schools to compete with wealthy schools. The non-policy-based formula in the bill is at least 22 percent of the average sports revenue of the 70 highest-revenue schools—an amount currently estimated to be \$20.5 million. Very few schools will be able to pay out this full amount and the situation will be exacerbated over time as the limits increase each year as average revenue increases. These schools will not be able to keep up with wealthy schools who plan to pay their athletes the full \$20.5 million each year or more. This will accelerate the loss of talent from these smaller schools, turning them into mere “feeder” schools for the largest programs.

Third, the SCORE Act ignores important national policies regarding college sports. It ignores the explosive growth of women’s sports and how revenue sharing under the House v. NCAA settlement may jeopardize these gains and lead to far less money flowing to women’s sports. It ignores the importance of college athletics to the Olympic pipeline. The SCORE Act will inevitably lead to the loss of men’s and women’s Olympic sports as schools are implicitly forced to devote ever more resources to the college football arms race. The SCORE Act also fails to address how conference realignment has changed the map of college sports and the absurdity of sending college athletes coast-to-coast on a weekly basis while foreclosing any opportunity for

athletes to have a voice at the table to advocate for themselves as these changes continue to play out.

The SCORE Act is a missed opportunity to deliver creative solutions that will ensure a sustainable future for college athletics beyond the wealthiest programs. Rather than rush the SCORE Act through as is, we should press pause to fix the issues facing schools of all sizes and opportunity for all athletes. The Act should: (1) consider policies to increase revenue for small and mid-sized schools and for women's and Olympic sports; (2) give college athletes a voice in how policies are made and implemented, including those related to conference realignment; (3) address the inequities and limitations of the House v. NCAA settlement regarding women's athletics; (4) address the budgetary concerns of small and mid-sized schools; (5) ensure health and safety protections; and (6) establish a commission on the future of college athletics.

College sports are important to student athletes, schools, alumni, fans, and communities across the United States. Congress needs to get this right and not miss an opportunity to fix the college sports landscape for generations to come. We urge everyone to think long-term and big picture about the future of college athletics that we want to achieve.

We look forward to working with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,



Michael Baumgartner
Member of Congress



Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Senate Commerce Committee

cc.

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson
Majority Leader Steve Scalise
Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries
Majority Leader Senator John Thune

Minority Leader Senator Charles Schumer

House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Brett Guthrie and Ranking Member Frank Pallone

House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman Tim Walberg and Ranking Member Robert C. Scott