



AMERICAN CONFERENCE

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June 15, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
U.S. Senate
167 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
daniel_crumpler@cruz.senate.gov

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
senator_cantwell@cantwell.senate.gov

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

As chair of the American Conference Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee (SAAC), I am writing to express our support for the Protect College Sports Act of 2026. Recent legal, regulatory, and economic changes have created significant uncertainty for student-athletes, institutions, and conferences, and a national framework is needed to ensure that college athletics continues to serve current and future generations of students. We support the Protect College Sports Act for the following reasons:

1. **Student-athletes deserve clear and consistent national rules.** The current patchwork of state laws and court decisions has created inconsistency across state lines and within conference affiliation. Student-athletes should not face different rights, obligations, or opportunities simply because they compete in different states. A uniform federal framework would provide greater transparency and consistency for everyone involved.
2. **College athletics must prioritize educational opportunities and the health and safety of student-athletes.** Student-athletes benefit from scholarships, academic support services, medical care, nutrition programs, mental health resources, tutoring, career development programs, and other benefits provided through intercollegiate athletics. Federal legislation should preserve and strengthen these educational benefits to ensure future



generations continue to have access to higher education opportunities and careers that may only be accessible to them by participating in college athletics.

3. **Student-athletes should have opportunities to benefit from their name, image, and likeness (NIL) while ensuring fairness and transparency.** NIL opportunities have provided meaningful benefits for many student-athletes. However, the absence of consistent national standards has created uncertainty and inconsistent enforcement. Reasonable disclosure requirements, transparent rules, and safeguards against exploitation such as agent registration can help ensure that NIL opportunities remain available while protecting student-athletes from predatory practices.
4. **Congress should protect broad-based participation opportunities.** The strength of college athletics lies in the thousands of opportunities available across men's and women's sports. Student-athletes in Olympic sports, emerging sports, and non-revenue sports deserve the same opportunity to compete, earn degrees, and represent their institutions. Federal legislation should help preserve these opportunities and prevent unintended consequences that could reduce participation or eliminate programs.

We appreciate your bipartisan efforts to protect student-athletes, and we urge lawmakers to continue this important work that expand opportunity, promote fairness and transparency, and support long-term stability. Thank you for your leadership and consideration of these important issues.

Sincerely,



Joy Graziano
Chair, Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee
American Conference

