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Office of the Commissioner

Dr. Charles McClelland

June 10, 2026

Dear Distinguished Members of Congress,

As I write this letter of support for the bipartisan legislation to help protect Intercollegiate Athletics, I would be remiss if I did not first acknowledge the tangentially related challenges recently highlighted by the Congressional Black Caucus as they relate to the ability of African American voters, primarily in the South, to elect political representation of their choosing. We appreciate the Caucus's longstanding advocacy on behalf of HBCUs and recognize that the communities affected by these issues include our student-athletes, their families, our alumni, and our campus leaders.

As Commissioner of the Southwestern Athletic Conference, representing thousands of talented student-athletes and millions of alumni and fans from 12 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), I am proud of the vital role we play in fostering a rich tradition of athletic and academic excellence across the college sports landscape.

Increasingly, however, this landscape is defined by volatility and disruption, driven by persistent legal threats and a patchwork of state laws. In the face of these challenges, the SWAC has consistently advocated for a uniform national framework to restore order and narrowly tailored protections that allow college sports to make and enforce common sense national rules.

For this reason, the SWAC supports the Protect College Sports Act, a bipartisan effort to establish a national framework and bring much needed legal stability to college athletics. The legislation reflects progress towards securing stability for college sports and crucially codifies essential student-athlete health, wellness, and academic support into law.

We believe a few provisions could be further refined to better support and protect college athletic opportunities, including removing barriers that may unnecessarily limit student-athletes' ability to participate in revenue sharing and notably, the bill does not ensure student-athletes are not employees of their schools because of their athletic participation; an issue the HBCU community has consistently raised and one the SWAC continues to view as critical to address in this or subsequent legislation.

We are also grateful for the bipartisan leadership and collaborative spirit behind the Protect College Sports Act and we believe that finding common ground is the only way to build a sustainable future for college sports.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charles McClelland
Commissioner, Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC)