



Big Ten Student-Athlete Issues Commission

Dear Senator McCormick,

As members of the Big Ten Student-Athlete Issues Commission (SAIC), we write on behalf of thousands of student-athletes across the conference to express our support for the Protect College Sports Act and encourage you to vote in favor of the bill.

College athletics provides one of the most unique and transformative opportunities to young adults, allowing them to pursue higher education, compete at the highest level, and develop leadership skills that continue beyond their playing careers. At the same time, student-athletes should be able to benefit from the value of their name, image, and likeness. These principles are not in conflict. A well-structured system can protect the traditional college experience while ensuring that student-athletes have access to fair and meaningful economic opportunities.

College athletics is at a critical point, and the absence of consistent national standards has created uncertainty for student-athletes, institutions, and conferences. The Protect College Sports Act would establish a national framework to promote stability, protect student-athletes, and preserve opportunities for current and future generations. We support the bill for the following reasons:

- 1. Student-athletes deserve clear and consistent national rules.** The current patchwork of state laws and court decisions has created inconsistent regulations for student-athletes depending on where they attend school. The Protect College Sports Act would establish uniform federal standards governing NIL, eligibility, transfers, and related matters. This consistency would provide greater transparency for student-athletes, institutions, conferences, and families while promoting more competitive equity.
- 2. College athletics must prioritize academics and student-athlete health and safety.** College athletics provides student-athletes with access to higher education, academic support, career development, medical care, mental health resources, and leadership opportunities. This bill protects student-athletes from pressure regarding their academic choices, safeguards scholarships, and helps ensure continued progress toward degree completion. It also strengthens medical coverage and health and safety standards, including protections related to sports injuries, catastrophic conditions, second opinions, and care following an athlete's final competition. These provisions help preserve the holistic development that makes college athletics unique.

3. **Student-athletes should have opportunities to benefit from their name, image, and likeness (NIL) while ensuring fairness and transparency.** Student-athletes should be able to benefit from the value they create through their NIL. This bill protects legitimate NIL opportunities while establishing safeguards against exploitation and cap-evasion. Agent registration, written contracts, clear disclosure requirements, limits on agent fees, and protections against deceptive conduct would help student-athletes make informed decisions and avoid predatory practices. A structured enforcement process for the revenue-sharing cap would also provide greater transparency and accountability.
4. **Congress must preserve athletic opportunities across all sports.** The strength of college athletics depends on the wide range of opportunities available across men's, women's, Olympic, emerging, and non-revenue sports. The Protect College Sports Act includes protections related to roster opportunities, scholarships, championship events, and continued investment in sports beyond football and men's basketball. These provisions are important to ensuring that student-athletes across a broad range of sports can continue to compete, pursue their education, and represent their institutions.

We urge the Senate to take decisive action by advancing the Protect College Sports Act. The bill reflects extensive collaboration and compromise among conferences, university leaders, coaches, and student-athletes. While no legislation will resolve every question facing college athletics, this bill provides a meaningful foundation for greater stability, transparency, opportunity, and student-athlete protection.

As members of the Big Ten Student-Athlete Issues Commission, we are committed to leaving college athletics better than we found it – for the high school students who are just beginning to consider this path and for the generations of student-athletes who will follow. Thank you for your leadership and for the time and effort devoted to the Protect College Sports Act. We are hopeful that this bipartisan effort will establish a firm foundation for the future of college athletics, and we respectfully urge you to support the bill.

Kind regards,

Big Ten Student-Athlete Issues Commission

On behalf of the undersigned members

Maisyn Rader, *SAIC Co-Chair & NCAA Division I SAAC Big Ten Representative*
The Ohio State University
Women's Gymnastics

Russell Soohoo, *SAIC Co-Chair*
University of Oregon
Men's Tennis

Jordan Dunigan, *SAIC Internal Chair*
University of Minnesota
Men's Track & Field

Landon Lauter, *SAIC External Chair*
Northwestern University
Men's Football

Brynn Storhoff, *SAIC Secretary*
University of Iowa
Women's Rowing

Cayla Jackson
University of Illinois
Women's Soccer

Javiera Baeza
Indiana University
Women's Field Hockey

Easton Fleshman
University of Iowa
Men's Wrestling

Wyatt Norvara
University of Michigan
Men's Baseball

Malayah Long
Michigan State University
Women's Volleyball

Jayden Edmonson
University of Minnesota
Men's Swim & Dive

Daniel Kaelin, *NCAA Division I Cabinet Representative*
University of Nebraska
Men's Football

Nadia Nemeth
Northwestern University
Women's Field Hockey

Isaiah Clerkley
Penn State University
Men's Swim & Dive

James Rowley
Purdue University
Men's Wrestling

Ava Chiarella
Rutgers University
Women's Lacrosse

Jaidin Russell
University of California, Los Angeles
Men's Volleyball

Madison Whyte
University of Southern California
Women's Track & Field

Zach Ramsey
University of Washington
Men's Soccer

Jack Janicki
University of Wisconsin
Men's Basketball

Abby Lynch

NCAA Division I SAAC Co-Vice Chair, Division I Cabinet Representative, White House Saving College Sports Roundtable

University of Illinois

Women's Soccer and Track & Field

Samuel Edwards

NCAA Division I Board of Directors Representative, White House Saving College Sports Roundtable

Michigan State University

Men's Football