October 19, 2026

Texas Congressional Delegation
United States House of Representatives
Washington D.C.

Dear Texas Delegation to the United States House of Representatives:

We write on behalf of Baylor University, Southern Methodist University, and Texas Christian University to urge your support of the Protect College Sports Act as it comes before the House for consideration and debate. As the leaders of three of Texas's largest and most established private research universities, we believe Congress has a rare opportunity to establish a fair, transparent, and lasting national framework that preserves the institution of college athletics, protects student-athletes, and provides needed stability for universities to continue fulfilling their academic, athletic, and community missions.

The current trajectory of college athletics points toward irreparable damage for the vast majority of America's Division I colleges and universities. Inconsistent state laws, relentless litigation, and widening gaps in conference revenue have forced even the most well-run institutions into impossible budget choices. The Protect College Sports Act of 2026 puts comprehensive reform on the table, and its core provisions map directly onto what college sports actually needs.

The legislation is a serious, bipartisan, and comprehensive answer to a crisis that incremental fixes, court settlements, and conference dynamics have failed to resolve. It establishes a uniform national standard for Name, Image, and Likeness; grants a carefully limited antitrust exemption so college sports can finally make and enforce its own rules; and – critically – creates the *option* for institutions and conferences to consolidate media rights so that revenue can support every program, at every school, and the student-athletes who make it all possible.

The bill underwent considerable scrutiny as it moved through the Senate. As a result, many changes made the bill even better. These changes have strengthened the framework governing compensation and enforcement while preserving legitimate NIL opportunities for student-athletes. The bill would also establish an accountability framework for agents, provide greater certainty regarding transfer and eligibility rules without hampering opportunities for mobility, and preserve scholarships, medical care, and other key benefits provided to student-athletes. And importantly, the bill respects and preserves the rights of student-athletes, including the right to representation, to whistleblower protection, and to a neutral forum to seek enforcement.

We recognize the ongoing discussion concerning the rights of student-athletes and their status under federal labor and employment laws. The Protect College Sports Act does not declare student-athletes as either employees or nonemployees, prohibit collective bargaining, or foreclose future congressional action. These are no doubt important questions. We maintain, however, that Congress should act on the Protect College Sports Act now without determining the employment question.

For Texas, the stakes are enormous. Baylor, SMU, and TCU together support thousands of student-athletes across men's and women's sports. As proud members of the Big 12 and Atlantic Coast

Conferences, our institutions compete for championships at the highest levels. The Protect College Sports Act will ensure we can continue doing so on a more level playing field.

To be sure, this is not only an athletics issue. American higher education is at a pivotal juncture, and this legislation represents the best chance we have to stabilize universities, maintain our academic and research missions, and preserve college sports as a national asset.

With many Members actively debating the merits of this legislation and the possibility of a vote before the end of this Congress, we respectfully ask for your support in advancing the Protect College Sports Act. The bill has now drawn support from all four A4 conferences as well as hundreds of colleges, universities, and major organizations across college and professional sports.

We are grateful for the time and attention you have given us on this issue, and we would welcome the opportunity to speak further about the impact of these changes on student-athletes and athletic programs at our institutions.

Thank you for your many years of tireless, dedicated public service to both Texas and our nation, and for your consideration of this important issue. We stand ready to work with you as the House considers the Protect College Sports Act.

Sincerely,

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