UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

September 22, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
253 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
428 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

As presidents of the three most recognizable Division 1 universities serving Washington state, we write today with a single and shared priority: our student-athletes. We are not advocating for the business of college sports; our focus has been and will always be on protecting the wellbeing and educational and athletic opportunities of our student-athletes. And we are concerned that without clear rules provided by Congress, we will continue to face the upheaval that has reshaped and brought tremendous uncertainty to college athletics.

Over the past several years, rules have shifted rapidly and legal challenges have multiplied, creating uncertainty across college athletics and raising concerns about roster opportunities and the continued sponsorship and support of women's and Olympic sports. Our students will benefit from the consistency, stability, and equity provided by this bill, and from a more durable framework for preserving broad-based opportunities in college athletics.

That is why we support the bipartisan Protect College Sports Act (S. 4668), and we believe that this bill will support our students and their families.

We believe that the Protect College Sports Act will put our students first by:

- Protecting scholarships: The bill writes scholarship protections into federal law, so student-athletes can continue pursuing their education and make progress toward a degree without disruption from coaching changes, roster decisions, or shifts in the college athletics landscape.
- Safeguarding healthcare: Student-athletes who put their bodies on the line for their teams deserve meaningful healthcare protections. The bill strengthens medical coverage and health and safety standards, including injury protections, access to second opinions, catastrophic injury safeguards, and care related to injuries sustained while competing.

- Preserving the right to earn compensation: The bill codifies student-athletes' ability to earn compensation from their name, image, and likeness (NIL), while establishing transparent national standards that protect legitimate opportunities and help ensure fairness across college athletics.
- Protecting Opportunities Across All Sports: As roster cuts and program eliminations have spread nationwide, this bill takes concrete steps to preserve athletic opportunities across women's, men's, Olympic, emerging, and non-revenue sports. By protecting roster opportunities, scholarships, and continued investment beyond the highest-revenue programs, the bill helps ensure that every student-athlete has a chance to compete, earn a degree, and represent their institution.
- Cracking down on predatory agents: Too many young athletes have been taken advantage of by unlicensed or bad-faith agents. This bill establishes clear standards for agent conduct, disclosures, and accountability so student-athletes and their families can make informed decisions and trust the professionals advising them.
- Bringing stability to the system: By setting nationwide standards for NIL, transfers, and eligibility, the bill replaces the current patchwork of conflicting state and conference rules with one clear, predictable framework. For student-athletes, families, universities and conferences, a consistent national standard will provide much-needed transparency, clarity, stability and fairness while promoting competitive equity and reducing the costly uncertainty created by ongoing litigation and a patchwork of state laws.

We need to protect the thousands of Washington state student-athletes whose opportunities have been put at risk by an unsustainable arms race in college athletics. This bill was developed with the direct input of student-athletes, coaches, and institutions, including many students here in Washington.

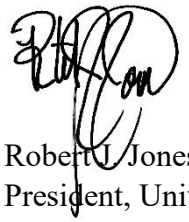
As presidents, our responsibility is to protect the educational and athletic experience of every student who comes through our doors including every young person who has committed years of their life to their sport and their school. The Protect College Sports Act does not solve every challenge facing college athletics, but it is a significant, bipartisan step toward establishing a consistent national framework that puts students first while creating long-term stability for colleges and universities. We appreciate the leadership of Senators Cantwell and Cruz in advancing this effort and look forward to continuing to work with all members of Congress as the legislation moves forward.

We appreciate your leadership of the Protect College Sports Act to help secure a stronger future for student-athletes in Washington and nationwide.

Sincerely,



Betsy Cantwell, Ph.D.
President, Washington State University



Robert J. Jones
President, University of Washington



Katia Passerini, Ph.D.
President, Gonzaga University

Cc: Washington delegation members