University of Pittsburgh

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The Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the Protect College Sports Act of 2026

Dear Honorable Members of the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation:

I am writing to urge your support for House passage of the *Protect College Sports Act of 2026*.

College athletics cannot afford another year of uncertainty and upheaval. For years, there has been growing instability in college sports: conflicting state NIL laws, constant litigation, escalating expenses, an unsustainable transfer and recruiting environment, and widening financial disparities among institutions and conferences. Meanwhile, colleges and universities are providing more resources to student-athletes while operating under a legal framework that increasingly prevents them from establishing uniform rules, controlling costs, or maximizing the value of the athletic programs they have built. The consequences of continued inaction are increasingly clear. The greatest risk is not to the handful of programs and athletes at the top of the system. It is to the thousands of student-athletes, particularly women and Olympic-sport athletes, whose scholarships, teams, and opportunities depend upon a sustainable economic model for college athletics.

The *Protect College Sports Act* provides that path forward. First, it establishes one national framework for college athletics. The current state-by-state patchwork is untenable. National competition requires national rules. The Act establishes federal standards for NIL and other critical areas of college athletics and provides the carefully tailored antitrust protections necessary to make those rules enforceable.

Second, it gives college athletics the tools to build a sustainable economic model. The Act provides institutions and conferences greater flexibility to maximize the value of their media rights, including the option to pursue consolidated media-rights arrangements. This is not a mandate, nor does it require equal revenue distribution. It simply gives institutions the lawful ability to consider

economic models that could generate substantially greater resources for student-athletes and help preserve women's, Olympic, and non-revenue sports.

Third, it puts student-athlete protections into federal law. The Act establishes meaningful standards governing academics, medical coverage, health and safety, NIL opportunities, agents, transfers, and student-athlete economic participation. These are protections that should not depend upon where a student-athlete happens to attend school.

The choice before Congress is no longer between the status quo and some hypothetical perfect solution. The status quo is itself a choice, and it is failing. In addition, court settlements cannot create a national regulatory system. States cannot solve a national problem individually. Conferences cannot provide themselves with federal antitrust protection. And colleges cannot preserve broad-based athletic opportunities indefinitely while costs escalate and the legal uncertainty surrounding the enterprise continues to grow. Congress can help solve this issue.

To this end, on September 28, Senate Republicans and Democrats came together to pass the *Protect College Sports Act* by a 77–22 bipartisan vote, demonstrating that this is neither a Republican issue nor a Democratic issue. It is a recognition across the political spectrum that college athletics needs a durable national framework. After years of debate, Congress now has a bipartisan bill capable of providing it.

There will always be another amendment that could be offered, another issue that could be studied, and another reason to wait. But waiting has consequences. Every year of uncertainty places additional pressure on athletic departments, scholarships, Olympic sports, and the opportunities available to future student-athletes.

On behalf of the University of Pittsburgh and our more than 30,000 students, including over 500 student-athletes across 19 intercollegiate athletic programs, I urge you to support swift House passage of the *Protect College Sports Act of 2026*.

Thank you for your support for the University of Pittsburgh and for your commitment to the future of higher education and intercollegiate athletics.

With warm regards,



Joan Gabel