



July 22, 2025

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Chairman  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Jordan  
Chairman  
House Judiciary Committee  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tim Walberg  
Chairman  
House Committee on Education and Workforce  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Guthrie, Jordan, and Walberg:

We write to express deep concern that the *Student Compensation and Opportunity Through Rights and Endorsements (SCORE) Act* as written fails to include any explicit protections or considerations for women college athletes—a glaring omission. Most notably, the bill does not reference Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the landmark civil rights law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded educational programs, including athletics and athletic financial compensation. This omission is especially troubling at a time when women's sports are growing at historic rates and rapidly ascending in today's culture in terms of popularity, consumption, and overall importance. Amidst this progress, women athletes face increasing legal uncertainty about how Title IX applies to name, image, and likeness (NIL) compensation and women's sports continue to be under-distributed and under-monetized in today's media ecosystem.<sup>1</sup> It is imperative that Congress acts to affirm and clarify that institutions that are recipients of federal aid must continue to provide Title IX protections to women athletes for all forms of financial assistance. We strongly urge you to amend the *SCORE Act* to explicitly protect women athletes, reinforce Title IX's authority and application to NIL compensation, and provide clear statutory guidance in light of recent court decisions, including *House, Hubbard, and Carter v. NCAA*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Green, T. (2025, June 14). *Why female athletes are challenging the NCAA's \$2.8bn settlement*. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2025/jun/14/ncaa-nil-settlement-title-ix-explained>

Women college athletes have been consistently shortchanged in the rapidly growing NIL economy, and that disparity is heightened for Black women.<sup>3</sup> The recent rollout of NIL-related settlements has only deepened the inequity, with women athletes expected to receive less than 10% of the total payout. Most colleges have indicated they plan to use the same thresholds outlined in the settlement when creating future revenue-sharing models—setting the stage for women college athletes to face a significant pay gap. This isn’t just unfair. It may violate federal law as multiple women college athletes are appealing the settlement challenging that it violates Title IX.<sup>4</sup> Research shows women college athletes receive significantly fewer opportunities and far less compensation than their male peers. At six major universities that were analyzed, male basketball players earned a median NIL payment of \$1,000 from third-party NIL collectives, while women earned just \$150. Men also secured four times as many high-value deals worth at least \$1,000.<sup>5</sup> Now, as of July 1, institutions have the authority to provide such financial assistance. Despite women’s rising visibility and performance on the national stage, these disparities not only persist, they are worsening. Without strong, intentional protections, the *SCORE Act* risks cementing these inequities into law. By failing to even mention Title IX, the bill forfeits a vital opportunity to close these gaps, modernize enforcement, and guarantee women athletes a fair shot in the new NIL landscape.

To meaningfully address these concerns and ensure women college athletes are not left behind, we urge you to consider adding the following critical provisions into the *SCORE Act*:

- Affirm that Title IX protections fully apply to NIL revenue sharing framework established under the Act;
- Clarify guidance from *House v. NCAA* to ensure women athletes receive an equitable share of any compensation or settlements;
- Close loopholes that undermine gender equity in athletics, including those that reduce women’s roster spots, scholarships, or competitive opportunities;
- Mandate that collectives and third-party entities offering NIL deals and operating on behalf of their institutions provide equal access and opportunity to women athletes;

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<sup>2</sup> Conniff, C. P., Abunaw, G., & Wheeler, T. (2025, June 20). *House v. NCAA settlement approved: Era of direct payments to college athletes begins*. Ropes & Gray. Retrieved from <https://www.ropesgray.com/en/insights/alerts/2025/06/house-v-ncaa-settlement-approved-era-of-direct-payments-to-college-athletes-begins>

<sup>3</sup> Blakely, S. (2022, March 4). *The discrepancy and inequity that comes with being a talented Black female athlete*. EBONY. Retrieved July 17, 2025, from <https://www.ebony.com/the-discrepancy-and-inequity-that-comes-with-being-a-talented-black-female-athlete/>

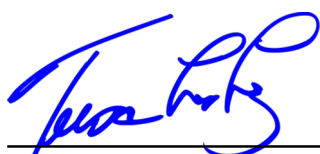
<sup>4</sup> Nuckols, B. (2025, June 11). *Female athletes appeal landmark NCAA settlement, saying it violates federal antidiscrimination law*. AP News. Retrieved from <https://apnews.com/article/ncaa-house-settlement-appeal-female-athletes-e2864d7bcd74d0c538c1f2e6c98fe6c>

<sup>5</sup> Samaha, A., & Giambalvo, E. (2024, October 21). As women’s hoops booms, NIL boosters favor men, records show. The Washington Post. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2024/10/21/college-basketball-basketball-nil-men-women/>

- Require robust transparency and reporting, including public disclosure of universities' NIL revenues, expenditures, and deal distribution by gender, to make inequities visible and enforceable.

These reforms are not just technical improvements—they are essential to ensuring that the federal NIL framework upholds fairness, protects progress, and reflects the reality that women athletes are not an afterthought in college sports, but rather the future of college sports. Thank you for your consideration of these provisions. We stand ready to work with you to ensure the *SCORE Act* includes meaningful protections for women collegiate athletes.

Sincerely,



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Teresa Leger Fernández  
Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



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Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



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Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Co-Chair  
Policy Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



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Deborah K. Ross  
Co-Chair  
Policy Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



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Emilia Strong Sykes  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



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Jasmine Crockett  
Co-Chair  
Communications Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



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JM Tokuda  
Progressive Caucus Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus



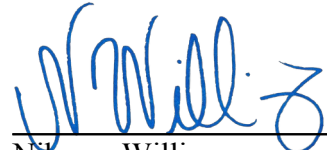
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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



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Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



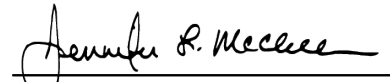
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Nikema Williams  
Chief Whip  
Democratic Women's Caucus



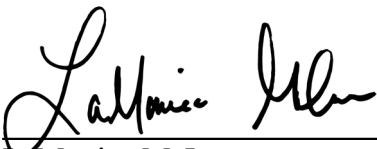
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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



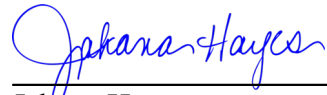
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Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



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LaMonica McIver  
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Kelly Morrison  
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Sylvia R. Garcia  
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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

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Maxine Dexter  
Member of Congress

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Andrea Salinas  
Congressional Hispanic  
Caucus Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus

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Angie Craig  
Member of Congress

**This letter is endorsed by:**

Women's National Basketball Players Association  
National Women's Soccer League Players Association  
Athletes Unlimited  
National Women's Law Center  
Women's Sports Foundation  
The Drake Group  
Sports Fans Coalition