



Autonomy 5 Conferences: ‘Legislation Tackling Student-Athlete Employment Status is an Important Step in the Future of College Athletics’

Protecting Student Athlete’s Economic Freedom Act addresses the crucial issue of student-athlete employment status

Washington, D.C. (June 12, 2024) – The Autonomy 5 Conferences (Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Pac-12 Conference, and Southeastern Conference) today released the following statement regarding H.R. 8534, *Protecting Student Athlete’s Economic Freedom Act*, being heard in the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

“We are encouraged to see the progress being made on Capitol Hill to address the many issues facing the future of collegiate athletics. The advancement of the *Protecting Student Athlete’s Economic Freedom Act* by the Committee on Education and the Workforce is a significant step forward in reaching a federal solution for many of the challenges currently affecting college sports.

“The recent settlement has only amplified the need for imminent, bipartisan federal action to help secure the future of college athletics. This legislation addresses one of the most critical lingering issues hanging over college sports today: student-athlete employee status. Protecting student-athletes’ status as students, not employees, is vital for preserving athletic and educational opportunities. Categorizing student-athletes as employees of their institutions would cause harm to the future viability of many college sports programs, particularly women’s and Olympic sports.

“Congress remains the only legislative body that can ensure student-athletes remain students and not employees of their respective institutions. Not only are conferences and institutions opposed to student-athletes being reclassified as employees, but student-athletes across all sports and competing at all levels have also largely rejected this move.

“By moving on this legislation, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce is playing a vital role in building on the strong momentum that has been growing on Capitol Hill in recent months toward federal legislation on key challenges facing college sports - including name, image, and likeness (NIL). We look forward to seeing continued action in both chambers this year before the end of the 118th Congress.”

###