

Chairman Bilirakis Opening Remarks at CMT Hearing:  
*“Winning Off the Field: Legislative Proposal to Stabilize NIL and College Athletics.”*

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to our legislative hearing on Name, Image, and Likeness in college athletics.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here today. Your experience and insight are critical as we navigate what is arguably one of the most transformative moments in the history of college sports.

In recent years, we’ve seen a dramatic shift in how college athletes engage with their sports, their schools, and their personal brands. The recent House v. NCAA settlement represents more than just a court decision — it marks a fundamental change in how college athletics will operate going forward. The timing couldn’t be more appropriate for legislative action.

That’s why I am leading the SCORE Act — the Student Compensation and Opportunity through Rights and Endorsements Act — a comprehensive, commonsense discussion draft that reflects months of dialogue with student-athletes, athletic directors, conference leaders, and the NCAA.

This is not just another proposal; it’s a targeted solution designed to bring predictability, fairness, and long-term balance to a system that has rapidly evolved without structure.

The SCORE Act is built around three core principles:

1. Clarity: by establishing a national standard that replaces the current patchwork of state laws,
2. Stability: by setting reasonable guardrails around the transfer portal and NIL deals to protect both athletes and programs, and
3. Support: by ensuring benefits like scholarship protections and financial literacy programs are not optional but expected.

For too long, student-athletes have operated in a gray area, empowered in some ways but exposed in others. The current model lacks the transparency and consistency that both athletes and institutions need. The SCORE Act brings that balance.

And while today's hearing is just the beginning of a broader tri-committee process, with the Committees on Judiciary and Education & Workforce, it's an important step. We are not here to micromanage college sports. We are here to put forward a framework that strengthens it — that ensures athletes can succeed on the field without losing sight of their futures off of it.

I am proud of the work this subcommittee has done on this issue, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to get this across the finish line. And Go Gators!