



Dear Congressional Leaders,

As the political landscape on the federal, state, and local levels continues to change and evolve, the NCAA Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (DII SAAC) recognizes the importance of maintaining the framework that has allowed college athletics to intentionally serve student-athletes across the country. Conversations around name, image, and likeness (NIL), student-athlete employment status, mental health, sports wagering, and a multitude of other topics have weaved their way into the congressional space and we, as the main constituents of these issues, are continuous advocates for the voices that are represented within bill language, testimonials, Capitol Hill visits, and intentional interactions with congresspeople at campuses throughout all three NCAA divisions. DII SAAC encourages the emphasis of the student-athlete voice to stay at the forefront of these conversations, recognizing the ever-changing landscape of college athletics and opportunities for student-athletes that continue to increase drastically.

Congress has the ability to protect student-athletes with federal legislation to ensure student-athletes can pursue their education, play sports at a competitive level, and impact their surrounding communities with the stability that the NCAA has provided for generations of college graduates and profound leaders in our country. **Particularly, DII SAAC aims to emphasize the importance of Congress prioritizing the student-athlete perspective in legislation that addresses non-employment status, NIL, and the potential impacts of sports wagering.**

DII SAAC represents nearly 133,000 student-athletes across 23 conferences and two countries. We recognize that it is our responsibility to act as representatives on behalf of all student-athletes and act in the best interests of current and future Division II athletes. DII SAAC has the unique ability to vote on legislative changes within the Division II governance structure, and we are committed to using our voices to make Division II an empowering experience for student-athletes to pursue their dreams both on and off their respective playing fields.

Non-Employment Status

As the legislative session begins, DII SAAC urges Congress to consider the potential impacts that certain issues can have on student-athletes. The employment model is not ideal for student-athletes across all three divisions, as these implications could put hindering financial burdens on the majority of the universities that serve student-athletes. As labor unions and other classifications have been explored, athletic administrators across the country agree that their already tight budgets would be pushed past their breaking point under an employment model. Additionally, the potential tax implications and state-specific parameters would ultimately be detrimental to the student-athlete experience. **DII SAAC urges Congress to protect the current non-employment status of student-athletes by passing a law that states we are not employees of our schools.**

Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL)

There have also been many recent developments with student-athletes having the ability to earn revenue and compensation from their NIL. These opportunities are deserved and were advocated for from the association as a whole. As NIL opportunities continue to evolve, **DII SAAC encourages the passage of legislation that provides one uniform federal standard with legal protection for student-athletes that benefit from NIL opportunities**, as agents and contracts can vary in commitment and these deals should be navigated with ethical morality from all involved parties.

Sports Wagering

Sports wagering is a growing issue that the NCAA has recognized and student-athletes have been directly impacted by. Many stories have surfaced around student-athletes being harassed, threatened, or had their athletic performance jeopardized by wagers and prop bets. **DII SAAC urges Congress to consider the negative implications of sports wagering as it pertains to college athletics**, knowing these student-athletes are still pursuing academic degrees and are subject to many negative consequences as it pertains to their mental and physical health.

We encourage Congress to regard this statement as a representation of the voices of thousands of student-athletes. To reiterate, many of these issues that revolve around student-athlete welfare have direct implications on our experience as student-athletes, and we ask that our voices are prioritized and heavily considered in addressing these areas. DII SAAC, on behalf of nearly 133,000 student-athletes, thanks Congress for its continued service and support of the NCAA, along with the student-athletes we diligently serve to protect, represent, and elevate. DII SAAC is open to continuing the conversations around these issues as we would love to share our stories and work alongside you to protect and enhance the student-athlete experience.

Kind regards,

NCAA Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee

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