



Statement of Support from the Northeast Conference Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
(SAAC)

Dear Esteemed members of the Education and Workforce Committee,

My name is Diego Diaz, a Men's Volleyball student-athlete at Fairleigh Dickinson University- Metropolitan, representing the student-athletes of the Northeast Conference at the Division I level. The Northeast Conference spans its regional mark across six states, including Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey.

We at the Northeast Conference wholeheartedly support the Student Compensation and Opportunity through Rights and Endorsements Act (SCORE Act) as a critical step in protecting student-athletes' rights, opportunities, and well-being. As a current Division I student-athlete, I can personally attest to the great opportunity college athletics has provided me. The core of college athletics has always been about more than competition—it's about shaping well-rounded individuals prepared for success in life, whether in professional sports or the broader workforce. Introducing institutional employment would undermine this foundation, shifting the focus away from education, personal growth, and the unique opportunities afforded to student-athletes.

From personal experience, I've been able to pursue two degrees, gain valuable internships in my field of study, and grow as an athlete, teammate, and leader—all without the added pressures of employment. This freedom has allowed me to fully embrace the college experience and prepare for life beyond athletics. For these reasons, it is vital that we protect and preserve the holistic development of student-athletes, ensuring they can continue to thrive academically, athletically, and personally before entering the demands of the professional world.

This bill reinforces a fundamental truth: student-athletes are students above all else, NOT employees. The Northeast Conference strongly supports the provisions that broaden our access to NIL opportunities, agent representation, privacy safeguards, and financial transparency, all while preserving our non-employment status. The SCORE Act also ensures comprehensive medical care, support for degree completion, and essential health, safety, and educational

resources. This bill fosters fairness and establishes consistent standards nationwide, reflecting a modern, student-centered vision for collegiate athletics.

Thank you for your time and dedication to improving college athletics.

Kindest regards,

As the representative of the Northeast Conference SAAC,

Diego Diaz
Northeast Conference NCAA Division I Representative
Men's Volleyball Student-Athlete
Fairleigh Dickinson University- Metropolitan