

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Kathy Castor

Markup of 2 Bills, Full Committee

July 23, 2025

Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning, everyone.

If a hardworking family were looking to Congress to help solve their problems, they would really be scratching their heads right now. Here we are at the end of the congressional session, the end of July. You look back on what the Congress has accomplished over the first seven months of the year with Trump in the White House, and you'd have to say, when it comes to students and our colleges and universities, this Congress and the Trump Administration are failing. They're failing the families. They're failing the students. They're failing the country.

There's a great incongruity here on what the committee is focused on and what we're doing oversight on. After all, the Trump Administration for many months has been illegally withholding billions of dollars in funding for our universities, for university research, for support of students, research relating to cancer, to diabetes, to agriculture, to you name it. This is going to set us back, and it empowers our adversaries, like the Chinese Communist Party and others across the globe.

The Congress, with the help of the Trump Administration, has cut Pell Grants and restrictive work study. They are making student loans more expensive. That was a lot of what was part of the big, ugly bill that passed to give tax breaks to billionaires and millionaires. So I'd say that the priorities here are completely out of whack, because what this Congress and the Trump Administration are doing by putting so much financial pressure and instability on our institutions of higher learning, research and students will have long lasting implications for our great country.

I do recognize that college sports are important. College athletics, people are very passionate about it. I know Ms. Dingell, I hear you, too. I want to thank Mr. Bilirakis and the Chairman and Rep. Trahan and other members who have jumped in to tackle this. It really should be given more time. In the subcommittee we raised issues about the application of Title IX inequity in sports enforcement, how student athletes can enforce NIL deals and revenue sharing. We talked about the extent of the antitrust exemption, what that does to empower

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students. We talked about the ability for student athletes to actually obtain a degree. We're going to offer a number of amendments along those lines today to improve this bill.

I doubt we can get there, but I encourage everyone to stay engaged because I think in the end we could come up with a bipartisan solution. We just shouldn't rush it, and we shouldn't turn a blind eye to what is happening in higher ed across this country either.

Thank you, and I yield back.