

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Debbie Dingell

Markup of 2 Bills, Full Committee

July 23, 2025

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Today, we're discussing two important efforts. I would like to focus my opening statement on college sports and the new NIL-era. This Committee has a real opportunity to help get this right. This issue matters to me, to my district, and to the State of Michigan.

I want to thank the Chair, the Ranking Member, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the time and effort that's gone into this bill.

As I've said before, I support this Committee's work because college sports matter to student athletes, their families, and communities across the country. I want to continue working on this bill, but I cannot support the bill today.

I think we are not giving this issue the time it needs so that we can reach a real agreement. I pushed to delay this markup so that we could continue constructive conversations to try to create a bipartisan product ahead of a markup.

Rushing this process risks getting it wrong, and if we get it wrong, it's college athletes who will be hurt. Athletes are the ones with the most at stake, and they must be at the center of this work.

I know not everyone wants to be productive or get something done on NIL, but I do. Trust me, I do. The reality is that legislation is going to pass, so let's take the time to make sure it protects women's sports and non-revenue and Olympic sports. This bill should reflect the shared goal of putting students first and protecting their well-being, both on and off the field.

In my district, I'm proud to represent two very different institutions: the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University. I've seen how college sports open doors and create pathways to education, leadership, and lifelong opportunities. And I've heard directly from college athletes — especially those who won't go pro — about the need for a national framework that gives them clarity, security, and support in this new NIL-era.

This is exactly why we need Congress — not the executive branch — to act. College sports and NIL shouldn't be shaped by executive action. This should be our job, and we need to do it right, with real bipartisan collaboration.

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We've made progress thus far, and I appreciate the many good-faith conversations. But there's more work to do and things we need to address. I remain committed to that work and to getting this right for the athletes, their futures, and the future of college sports.

Thank you, and I yield back.