

Statement of Subcommittee Member Lori Trahan
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade

Hearing on “Winning Off the Field: Legislative Proposal to Stabilize NIL and College Athletics”

June 12, 2025

I’m deeply disappointed for the second year in a row, Republicans on this Committee are advancing a partisan college sports bill that protects the power brokers of college athletics at the expense of the athletes themselves. This legislation was crafted behind closed doors, with no input from Democratic members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, the Judiciary Committee, or the Education and Workforce Committee.

In fact, we didn’t see a draft of the bill until late last week – not because our Republican colleagues shared it with us, but because lobbyists and members of the media got it first. I’m a former D1 athlete, and I’m deeply, I care deeply about the future of college sports. So that when I asked the Chairman about the rumored hearing today, he said he’d be happy to discuss the proposal with me beforehand. Sadly, that meeting never happened.

What makes this all the more frustrating is that there is bipartisan agreement on serious problems in college sports that deserve congressional action. International athletes are being denied the same NIL rights as their teammates. Women are being left out of roster spots due to Title IX loopholes.

We could be working together on solutions. Instead, the SCORE Act uses the approval of the House settlement as justification to slam the door on future progress for college athletes.

Proponents claim the system is broken, but the fact that three separate antitrust cases are being settled proves otherwise. We have a system where the NCAA, conferences, and their member institutions set rules. Athletes can challenge them. And if the rules are unfair, courts can intervene, or a deal can be struck.

This bill rewrites that process to guarantee the people in power always win, and the athletes who fuel this multibillion-dollar industry always lose.

I oppose the legislation as written, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses, and I yield to Congresswoman Clarke.