

Contact: Dr. B. David Ridpath, 740-593-9496

ridpath@ohio.edu

The Drake Group Announces Public Release of Response to NCAA President Myles Brand's Defense of the NCAA's Tax Exempt Status

ATTACHED: MSWORD Document entitled "*A Commentary on NCAA President Myles Brand's November 13, 2006 Reply to the Honorable William Thomas's Letter of October 2, 2006,*" Full document in PDF and WORD format can be found at www.thedrakegroup.org

On October 2, 2006, as part of a continual review of tax exempt organizations, NCAA President Myles Brand received a detailed letter of inquiry from Chairman William Thomas of the House Committee on Ways and Means. Thomas asked pointed questions as to why the NCAA deserved continued status as a not-for-profit, tax exempt institution of higher education

It is the considered opinion of The Drake Group that Brand's responses, in a November 13, 2006 letter to Thomas, while eloquent and detailed, failed to adequately defend the organization's status as a non-profit educational entity. Apparently confident in the adequacy of his response and the 2006 congressional elections, Brand recently declared this inquiry to be an issue that has "gone away."

It is our intent to insure that this issue does not go away and that it continues to be a high priority item in public discussion. It is crucial that the purpose of higher education and intercollegiate athletics become one and the same. Currently this is not the case. The gulf between the for-profit commercialized college athletics enterprise and the non-profit higher education enterprise has never been greater.

There is abundant evidence that the NCAA and many of its member schools cannot maintain athletics as an integral part of their academic institutions and that academic integrity is compromised on a seemingly routine basis. Therefore, The Drake Group calls on the Senate Finance Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means, to hold hearings in 2007 to consider revoking the tax-exempt status of the NCAA unless and until it can demonstrate that it is indeed part of the educational process and deserving of such an exemption.

Furthermore, we strongly believe the NCAA cannot justify itself as part of the educational process without complete transparency (including academic disclosure), accountability, and oversight. The attached document provides commentaries on the questions posed by Chairman Thomas and more specifically on Brand's comments. This document also presents real solutions to issues confronting intercollegiate athletics and academic integrity. It is important to note that many scholars of intercollegiate athletics volunteered considerable amount of personal time preparing this document entitled "*A Commentary on NCAA President Myles Brand's November 13, 2006 Reply to the Honorable William Thomas's Letter of October 2, 2006.*"

It is our fervent hope that this commentary stimulates a level of debate and discussion sufficient to bring big-time intercollegiate athletics under control – returning the classroom to the faculty. This is not a time to "tinker." It is time for a revolutionary approach to returning academic integrity to our nation's institutions of higher learning.

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