FACT SHEET
CONGRESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INCOLLEGATE ATHLETICS
ACT OF 2019

Purpose: Establish a bi-partisan Congressional Advisory Commission to identify and examine issues of national concern related to the conduct of intercollegiate athletics

- The Drake Group contends that higher education is not well-served by the media’s and public’s current myopic focus on athlete compensation, concussion or various intercollegiate athletics scandals ranging from sexual assault and player deaths to academic fraud. **It is time for Congress to intervene by undertaking a comprehensive multiyear study of the intercollegiate athletic system that has been corrupted by the commercial success of a relatively small number of schools.**

- In the 1970’s a blue-ribbon Presidential Commission on Olympic Sports resulted in the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act of 1978 which revamped our Olympic non-school sports system. The time has come to undertake the same bi-partisan, objective and careful review of athletics in higher education. One-off anti-trust lawsuits and NCAA special committees appointed to deflect the altogether too frequent media exposure of athletics program scandals will not resolve the catastrophic failure of NCAA intercollegiate athletics governance.

- The academic integrity of American higher education is at stake. The health and well-being of college athletes is at stake.

Specific Concerns: Impact of Intercollegiate Athletics on Higher Education

1. **Unsustainable intercollegiate athletics economic system results in non-athlete student debt from mandatory student fees and tuition increases affected by institutional subsidies of athletics.** Over 1100 institutions in the NCAA, only 20-24 Football Bowl Subdivision schools in any one year realize more revenues than they spend

- Existing collegiate athletic programs throughout the NCAA are heavily dependent on institutional subsidies, both student fees and general fund allocations, totaling more than $10.3 billion over the 2009-10 to 2013-14 five-year period in Division I alone. Subsidy rates, at some institutions totaling $1,500 per student annually, were highest at colleges where ticket sales and other
revenue were the lowest and student populations the poorest (based on the percentage of Pell Grant recipients).  

- Division II (312) and III (442) 100% supported by student fees/general fund subsidies – few generate revenues
- Division I FBS (129) mean operating deficit FBS institutions is over $12 million annually EXCLUDING most capital costs and certain indirect administrative costs – median deficit of $25 million if full accounting. Other D-I FCS (124) and D-I Non-Football (95) – median operating deficit = ($12.5 million)

2. Sustaining Athletics Requires Increased Subsidies. Other than the aforementioned 20-24 FBS institutions that make more than they spend on an operating basis, the vast majority of NCAA members are considering one or more of the following means to raise new funds or shift existing funds to enable increased spending, all of which pose significant threats to higher education institutions struggling to meet academic needs:

- increase general fund and/or mandatory student fee athletic program subsidies at a time when student loans and debt, high tuition rates and high student fees are causing great national concern;  
- appeal to donors to increase their gifts to athletics at a time when such gifts are needed for the larger institution;  
- eliminate or further reduce funding for Olympic sports;  
- cease already insufficient efforts to achieve Title IX compliance for women’s athletics;  
- pressure state legislatures to utilize already stressed state education funds to supplement athletics budgets; and  
- increase game ticket prices and prices of newly built lavish suites.

3. Unprecedented escalation of collegiate head and assistant coach and athletic director salaries. Inappropriate for non-profit educational programs at public institutions of higher education:

- Over 119 football and basketball head coaches are making $1 million or more;  
- The top 25 collegiate football coaches are paid an average of $5.2 million annually (low of $3.5 million and high of $11.1 million), not including handsome perquisites and related opportunities for outside income;  
- The top 25 collegiate basketball coaches are paid an average of $3.2 million annually (low of $2 million and high of $7.8 million);  
- The mean salaries of FBS athletic directors is over $500,000 per year; and  
- The highest paid public employees in 40 of the 50 states are athletic coaches at public colleges and universities.

4. Division I recruiting arms race = building spree on lavish facilities and isolation of athletes from rest of student body – NCAA doesn’t control costs. The NCAA does not prohibit institutions from building lavish residence halls, training tables, game rooms, study centers, computer labs, recreational areas, locker rooms, conditioning/weight rooms, barber shops, practice facilities and competitive facilities restricted for athletes use only, expenditures considered by many to be inappropriate for non-profit educational institutions.

5. Pending additional antitrust, labor and concussion lawsuits create potential liabilities in the hundreds of millions of dollars.
6. Academic fraud and other academic improprieties within athletic departments and extensive recruiting of underprepared athletes who do not meet published institutional admissions standards threaten the academic integrity of institutions of higher education. Athletic departments are running their own academic support programs – direct conflict of interest.

7. Athletic departments and the NCAA are not using their power and resources to address the health and safety needs of college athletes
   - Concussion
   - athlete deaths (McNair @ U. of Maryland)
   - rhabdomyolysis (life-threatening @ U. of Houston, U. of Iowa and others)
   - Almost all schools require athletes to provide their own basic athletic injury insurance
   - NCAA does not require member institutions to comply with sports medicine best practices

8. Antiquated NCAA amateur status rules do not allow athletes to exploit the rights to their own names images and likenesses or seek employment available to non-athlete students without being labeled a “professional athlete” or declared ineligible for athletics.

9. Regular athletics scandals blight the reputations of the country’s most respected institutions of higher education
   - UNC academic fraud
   - Michigan State/Ohio State staff sexual assault of athletes
   - Baylor, Florida State, athlete sexual assault
   - FBI corruption charges-Adidas recruiting payoffs
   - Yale, USC, Duke, Texas-Austin - Recent admissions scandals using athlete special admission slots

For further information contact: David Ridpath, President Ridpath@ohio.edu or Donna Lopiano-President-Elect Donna.Lopiano@gmail.com


7. For example see Gehrke, R. Legislature puts $1.5 million in Public Funds Behind Aggie Sports. The Salt Lake Tribune (March 12, 2015) Retrieve at: http://archive.sltrib.com/article.php?id=2279640&itype=CMসID; University of Wyoming. Legislature Funds UW Projects, Reduces Block Grant (March 7, 2016), including $4 million annually to athletics, retrieve at: http://www.uwy.edu/uw/news/2016/03/legislature-funds-uw-
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