Office of the Attorney General



JONATHAN SKRMETTI ATTORNEY GENERAL AND REPORTER

P.O. BOX 20207, NASHVILLE, TN 37202 TELEPHONE (615)741-3491 FACSIMILE (615)741-2009

The Honorable Mike Johnson Speaker U.S. House of Representatives 2468 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries Minority Leader U.S. House of Representatives 2433 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx Chairwoman Committee on Education & the Workforce U.S. House of Representatives 2462 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 The Honorable Chuck Schumer Majority Leader U.S. Senate 322 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Minority Leader U.S. Senate 317 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support Passage of the NCAA Accountability Act of 2023

Dear Speaker, Majority Leader, Minority Leaders, and Chairwoman,

We, the undersigned Attorneys General acting in our capacity as the chief legal officers of our states, write in support of the NCAA Accountability Act of 2023 ("The Act"). This bipartisan effort provides a real solution to a meaningful problem in higher education. And though the legislative process is ongoing, and details will still be worked out by you and your colleagues, we believe that passage of this bill into law will benefit our student-athletes, our colleges and universities, our states, and our nation.

The NCAA exercises tremendous power over the opportunities available to college athletes in our states, and there is currently no effective check on the organization's conduct if it behaves in an arbitrary or inconsistent manner. The Act

protects our college athletes and our institutes of higher education by mandating a legal framework to constrain the worst potential abuses of the NCAA's authority.

While the NCAA is ostensibly controlled by its member institutions, the scale of the organization is such that many of us have seen our state university clients – even our flagship land grant universities – mistreated by lengthy, opaque, and arbitrary investigations. The poor behavior that inevitably flows from an unchecked concentration of power leaves our student-athletes vulnerable to mistreatment, distracts both students and universities from their educational priorities, and results in unequal treatment that can deprive students, coaches, and institutions of a fair process.

We want to highlight several key provisions of the Act that we believe make it an effective piece of legislation.

First, the Act imposes due process requirements that require transparency, confidentiality, and efficiency in any NCAA investigation. Several of us have seen lengthy investigations that drag on for years, consuming state resources and creating uncertainty for both our student-athletes and our schools. The Act provides for investigations of no longer than one year and creates a two-year statute of limitations. It also prohibits the NCAA from relying on secret informants to make enforcement decisions. The Act additionally maintains the integrity of the confidential investigative process by preventing the NCAA from publicly disclosing information about an ongoing investigation until formal charges are filed.

Second, the Act imposes substantive fairness requirements on the NCAA. It requires consistent enforcement so that schools engaged in similar misconduct will face similar penalties. It further allows member colleges and universities to resolve disputes over sanctions through an independent arbitration process. To ensure the NCAA's compliance with all of these new mandates, the Act requires the NCAA to submit annual reports to the state Attorneys General and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Finally, the Act comes with a meaningful enforcement mechanism by establishing federal supervision and authorizing the U.S. Department of Justice to fine the NCAA or individual officials up to \$15,000,000 for violating the Act and to order the permanent removal of any member of the NCAA's Board of Governors.

We are pleased to come together in support of this bill and respectfully encourage you to pass it.

Sincerely,

William Tong Connecticut Attorney General

Josh Stein North Carolina Attorney General

Todd Rokita Indiana Attorney General

Jonathan Skrmetti Tennessee Attorney General

Kris Mayes Arizona Attorney General

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Phil Weiser Colorado Attorney General

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Kwame Raoul Illinois Attorney General

Tim Griffin Arkansas Attorney General

Brian Schwalb District of Columbia Attorney General

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Aaron M. Frey Maine Attorney General

Anthony G. Brown Maryland Attorney General

Matthew J. Platkin New Jersey Attorney General

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Dave Yost Ohio Attorney General

Peter F. Neronha Rhode Island Attorney General

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Aaron D. Ford Nevada Attorney General

С

Letitia James New York Attorney General

Michelle Henry Pennsylvania Attorney General

Sean D. Reyes Utah Attorney General

c.c.

The Honorable David Kustoff U.S. House of Representatives 560 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Clarence "Burgess" Owens U.S. House of Representatives 309 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Josh Harder U.S. House of Representatives 209 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515