

Senator Cory Booker's College Athletes Bill of Rights Framework

Previously endorsed by Color of Change, National College Players Association, and the Sports Fans Coalition

College sports have the unique ability to transcend partisan division and cultural differences to unite millions of Americans as fans. Yet, college sports have also come to reflect many of the inequalities that permeate everyday life in America—where systems fail to protect those under their charge, where hard-working Americans are blocked from sharing in the profits they help create, and where systemic and structural racism disadvantage and exploit people of color.

The College Athletes' Bill of Rights will advance justice and opportunity for college athletes by setting a baseline standard to protect athletes across the country while ensuring that individual states still have the flexibility to provide greater protections and opportunities for college athletes.

The College Athletes Bill of Rights will provide:

- **Fair and equitable compensation.** The College Athletes' Bill of Rights will allow college athletes to market their name, image, and likeness (NIL), either individually or as a group, with minimal restrictions.
- **Enforceable evidence-based health, safety, and wellness standards.** Within 120 days of enactment, the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) along with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will consult with the Sports Science Institution and the NCAA to develop industry-leading health, safety, and wellness standards addressing everything from how to handle concussion and traumatic brain injuries to sexual assault and interpersonal violence to athletics health care administration.
- **Improved educational outcomes and opportunities.** While the NCAA often touts its near-90 percent graduation rate for college athletes, independent studies assert that number is far lower—roughly 70 percent of college athletes graduate in six years while only 55 percent of Black male college athletes graduate in six years. Even more, many college athletes are pressured toward less challenging classes and majors to allow more time and focus on sport. Under the College Athletes' Bill of Rights, all college athletes would receive a scholarship for as

many years as it takes for them to receive an undergraduate degree, while the coaches and athletic department personnel would be banned from influencing or retaliating against a college athlete for their choice of an academic course or major.

- **Clarity and Strength Regarding Gender Equity in College Sports.** The updated version of the College Athletes Bill of Rights includes provisions to bolster compliance to, and the enforceability of, Title IX. By requiring institutions of higher education to conduct annual evaluations of relevant statistics to measure impact, and by requiring subsequent public dissemination of data, the bill will enable accurate assessment of institutional compliance and accountability. The bill will also require that athletic associations do not discriminate on the basis of sex with regard to health and safety, medical care, athletic participation, facilities, and other factors.
- **Establish a Medical Trust Fund.** The College Athletes' Bill of Rights will establish a Medical Trust Fund that athletes can use to cover the costs of any out-of-pocket medical expenses for the duration of their time as a college athlete for five years after their eligibility expires if used to treat a sport-related injury. Athletes can also draw from the Medical Trust Fund to treat certain long-term injuries, including chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).
- **Accountability across college sports.** Each school will be required to provide annual public reporting that describes total revenues and expenditures, including compensation for athletic department personnel and booster donations as well as reporting on the number of hours athletes commit to athletic activities—including all mandatory workouts, “voluntary” workouts, film study, and game travel—and academic outcomes disaggregated by program, race, and gender.
- **Freedom for college athletes to attend the institution of their choice.** Our plan will ban restrictions and penalties that prevent college athletes from attending the institution of their choice, including penalties associated with transferring schools and penalties hidden behind National Letters of Intent.
- **Establish the Commission on College Athletics.** The Commission on College Athletics—composed of nine members including no fewer than 5 former college athletes and individuals with expertise ranging from publicity law to Title IX—to ensure athletes are aware of their new rights and that those rights are upheld.