



February 19, 2020

*A History of Service. A Promise to Lead.*

TO: Senators Parent, Baruth, Hardy, Perchlik and members of the Senate Education Committee

RE: S.328 – Student-Athlete Compensation

As President of Norwich University, I appreciate the opportunity to convey our views respective to S.328, a proposed bill allowing Vermont student-athletes to earn compensation from the use of the student-athlete's name, image, or likeness. As I am unable to testify in person due to scheduling conflicts, Norwich University Athletic Director Anthony Mariano is present with you today to respond further to questions regarding to our response to this proposed legislation.

Earlier this month, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) updated its association's members, of which Norwich University is one, to report that the NCAA Board of Governors has created a working group specifically to study the issue of student athletic compensation for the usage of their name, image and likeness and the implications such legislation would have on school athletic programs and student athletes.

That working group has already recommended that the student-athletes be allowed to benefit from the use of their name, image and likeness "consistent with the collegiate model." This past January 2020 at the NCAA Convention, each division (I, II and III) initiated discussions regarding the issue and processes are in place to garner feedback and to thoroughly investigate the issues that arise in the fact finding efforts. The working group will continue to gather feedback through April and refine its recommendations on the principles and regulatory framework. We anticipate the 2021 NCAA Convention will put forward legislation with greater detail in January 2021.

It is Norwich University's recommendation that S.328 be postponed to a future date at which time NCAA processes unfold in order for this committee to make the most informed, cohesive and sustainable legislation that maintains uniform and fair competition nationally. As a national governing body, NCAA must ensure a fair and uniform approach to this issue, which will be challenging and more complex if state laws are created absent of the benefit of the thorough research and discussion of the NCAA working group over the months ahead.

Should this committee wish to learn more about the NCAA Board of Governors' recent actions to permit students participating in athletics the opportunity to benefit from the use of their name, image and likeness in a manner consistent with the collegiate model, a timeline is available at <http://www.ncaa.org/about/taking-action#next>.

In closing, name, image and likeness is a complex matter and its unregulated use can result in potential unintended consequences which would negatively impact the recruiting environment and serve as a slippery slope towards the professionalization of college sports. The NCAA is committed to educating and working with policymakers and key stakeholders such as Norwich University with ongoing efforts to meet the needs of the 21st century student-athlete and preserve a uniquely American phenomenon, which provides access to education, positively impacts local economies and unifies individuals from all walks of life.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard W. Schneider".

Richard W. Schneider  
RADM, USCGR (Ret.)  
President

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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