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# NCAA President urges Congress to safeguard sports in colleges unable to compensate their athletes

## Description

The urgency of NCAA president Baker's comments amplified on Friday when a Tennessee judge ruled that the NCAA cannot prevent schools from using name, image and likeness (NIL) money to lure athletes into their programs. Baker, informed of the decision in the middle of an interaction with journalists, chose not to comment. The NCAA organization expressed their concern later, stating that the ruling "will exacerbate an already turbulent collegiate environment."

In the twilight of last year, Baker put forth a proposal to establish a new Division I tier. This provision would empower schools that generate substantial revenue from sports to remunerate their athletes. Nevertheless, he has concerns that the attempts to reform the NCAA internally or changes triggered by court rulings might jeopardize sports at most member schools. The NCAA presently faces various lawsuits and an initiative at Dartmouth to unionize, which could potentially reclassify athletes as employees.

Baker asserted that such an employment model would not be feasible at historically Black colleges and universities, or Division II or III schools. "We are looking at about 95% of colleges that invest between approximately \$40 million and \$5 million in college sports and operate at a loss," Baker stated, underscoring the absence of lucrative television contracts and unsatisfactory income statements or balance sheets.

Marking his first year as the NCAA president on March 1, Baker expressed optimism about his interactions with Congress members who concur with him about charting a course to secure and standardize players' NIL rights while opening up more opportunities for NCAA athletes to monetize their participation.

Baker suggested that he was looking at the bigger picture with respect to legislative action and was distancing himself from the desire to get a bill passed amid a politically charged election year. Priorities like funding for border security and Ukraine that have found themselves in a deadlock among both parties, dwarf the importance of this bill in the broad scheme of Congressional work.

The NCAA and the Power Five conferences have spent heavily on lobbying, with a sum exceeding \$2.9 million, setting a record. The surge in spendings was chiefly driven by the Atlantic Coast Conference, which became the first conference to surpass \$1 million in lobbying expenditures within a single year.

However, two senators criticized the NCAA's lobbying efforts. Sen. Marsha Blackburn points out the NCAA's history of controversial decisions leading to unfair penalties for athletes, coaches, and universities. Sen. Chris Murphy, encouraged the NCAA to negotiate directly with the athletes towards devising a fresh model that ensures fair compensation.

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## Vocabulary List:

1. **Amplified** // (verb): To make something stronger or more intense.
2. **Remunerate** // (verb): To pay or reward someone for their services.
3. **Exacerbate** // (verb): To make a situation worse or more severe.
4. **Turbulent** // (adjective): Characterized by conflict, disorder, or confusion; not stable or calm.
5. **Empower** // (verb): To give power or authority to someone.
6. **Jeopardize** // (verb): To put something or someone in danger of being harmed or destroyed.

## CATEGORY

1. Uncategorized

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