

Ohio State's Karen Dennis Testifies To U.S. Senate Committee In Support Of Amateurism Model, NIL



Karen Dennis, Ohio State's director of track and field and cross country, testified before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions regarding compensating college athletes and the potential impact on student-athletes and their schools on Tuesday, Sept. 15, per an Ohio State release.

Dennis stepped forward as the first collegiate head coach to testify at any of the four Senate hearings on student-athletes being compensated for their name, image and likeness (NIL).

Per the release, Dennis expressed her support for the amateurism model of collegiate athletics in her testimony, indicating that paying players in a "pay-to-play" model would have serious, negative consequences.

Dennis said that funding a "pay-to-play" model could result in smaller teams, taking opportunities away from many student-athletes, particularly those who play sports that do not generate revenue.

In regard to student-athletes earning money for their name, image and likeness, Dennis said it will benefit more student-athletes while still "embracing the successful NCAA amateur sport structure," per the release.

Dennis said student-athletes should be supported by "guardrails and education programs" to assist them in regard to NIL. She also cautioned that unexpected tax liabilities and financial implications could affect a student-athlete's eligibility for certain student-aid programs like Pell Grants.

Additionally, Dennis encouraged policymakers to continue to hear multiple viewpoints to ensure that the appropriate structure supports student-athletes and protects the amateurism model that has been so important to the collegiate experience of millions of athletes, per the release.

The hearing to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was chaired by Sen. Lamar Alexander (Tenn.), who is the former U.S. Secretary of Education and President of the University of Tennessee.

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