

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1011

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the structure and governance of the Football Bowl Subdivision postseason should prioritize broad-based athletic opportunity, financial sustainability for college athletics, and competitive balance, and that innovative proposals to expand broad based postseason participation—such as proposals advanced by Coach Mike Leach—warrant serious consideration to mitigate anticompetitive effects in top-division college football.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 20, 2026

Mr. BAUMGARTNER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the structure and governance of the Football Bowl Subdivision postseason should prioritize broad-based athletic opportunity, financial sustainability for college athletics, and competitive balance, and that innovative proposals to expand broad based postseason participation—such as proposals advanced by Coach Mike Leach—warrant serious consideration to mitigate anticompetitive effects in top-division college football.

Whereas Coach Mike Leach repeatedly advanced an innovative proposal to expand top-division college football's postseason to a broad, bracketed format—arguing that

the sport could accommodate a 16-, 32-, or 64-team bracket and determine a champion on the field, rather than relying on a narrow, highly selective postseason gate;

Whereas Coach Leach specifically argued that an inclusive bracket could be calendar-feasible if paired with responsible season design—including a shorter regular season—and that the resulting structure would give more teams a meaningful late-season path while preserving competitive balance;

Whereas Coach Leach’s proposal drew explicit parallels to other levels of football that routinely use bracketed postseason formats to produce champions and sustain broad-based competitive engagement;

Whereas multiple levels of NCAA football already operate broad-access postseason tournaments as the standard method of determining championships, including: (1) the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), which uses a bracket with automatic qualifiers and at-large bids; (2) NCAA Division II, which has expanded to a 32-team championship bracket; and (3) NCAA Division III, which has expanded to a 40-team bracket, further demonstrating that larger playoff fields can be administered in a student-athlete and academic environment when structured around principles of equal opportunity, competitive balance, and financial sustainability;

Whereas by contrast, the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS)—a national collective of 136 programs—operates a comparatively narrow postseason championship pathway through the College Football Playoff (CFP), which currently selects a 12-team championship field (meaning

fewer than one in ten FBS programs can reach the championship bracket in a given year);

Whereas the CFP's own historical record reflects that championship access has been concentrated among a limited set of institutions (only 27 teams have appeared in the CFP era to date, and one program has appeared nine times), reinforcing concerns that a narrow gate can entrench incumbent competitive advantage;

Whereas public reporting indicates that postseason football revenues are distributed in a manner that can reinforce conference-level concentration, including reports that the SEC and Big Ten each receive about 29 percent of CFP base distributions while the Group of Five conferences collectively receive about 9 percent;

Whereas the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics and affiliated researchers have warned at a high level that the financial trajectory of major college sports is increasingly concentrated and self-reinforcing, projecting that by fiscal year 2032 total annual athletics revenue at public FBS institutions will be approximately \$20.9 billion, with \$16.7 billion generated by 54 Autonomy-conference public institutions (roughly four-fifths of that total);

Whereas NCAA financial reporting underscores the sustainability pressure facing much of the FBS system, showing that (for 2022) the median FBS program generated approximately \$71 million in revenue against approximately \$85.7 million in total expenses, producing a median operating deficit of approximately \$19.3 million;

Whereas public-records-based research indicates that bowl participation frequently produces net financial losses for

participating programs—reporting that around 70 percent of public FBS colleges incurred bowl-game financial losses from 2015–2018—underscoring how the legacy postseason model can impose costs on many institutions even as championship access remains narrowly gated, all while reform advocates argue that lawful pooling or national packaging approaches could unlock \$4–\$7 billion in additional value—value that could be distributed more broadly to strengthen opportunity and competitive balance;

Whereas Coach Leach’s vision for a broad-access, bracketed postseason—paired with a more unified approach to packaging and monetizing college football media rights—could create a materially more valuable national product and distribute benefits more widely,

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) the governance and structure of the FBS
4 postseason should expand meaningful competitive
5 opportunity for student-athletes and institutions
6 consistent with academic integrity and student-ath-
7 lete welfare;

8 (2) postseason design and revenue structures
9 should be evaluated and reformed where they
10 produce anticompetitive effects that entrench advan-
11 tages for a select few schools and erode competitive
12 balance; and

1 (3) proposals like those advanced by Coach
2 Mike Leach—emphasizing broader, objective-access
3 playoff participation paired with responsible season-
4 structure reforms—represent the kind of innovative
5 thinking necessary to protect opportunity, sustain-
6 ability, and fair competition in major college foot-
7 ball.

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