

Remarks During a Roundtable Discussion on Saving College Sports and an Exchange With Reporters

March 6, 2026

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, everybody. Coach. Thank you very much, everybody. Please.

This is a very important meeting. We had a lot of important meetings today, but this is a big one because this is really the future of, I think, beyond college sports. This is the future of colleges, because we're looking at numbers that are coming in and the amount of money being spent and lost by otherwise very successful schools is astounding just in a short period of time, and it's only going to get worse. So we have to save college sports and save, I believe, colleges.

We have to save our Olympic team, because so many sports that are in the Olympics will no longer be represented by people that went through college and became competitive, became great at the sport. We won't be anywhere near what we were.

I think it's just a very, very important meeting. We have the most important people in college sports and really beyond, beyond. And what I'd like to do is, I'll say a few words. I'm going to ask Marco and a few to also say a few words, and I'd like to take your suggestions.

And we have the Speaker. We have John Thune is here or represented. We have some of the big politicians: Senators, Congresspeople, people that can make it get approved.

And because we ultimately—we have to go through—I guess we have to go through—I'd do an Executive order. I'd love to do that. I'll probably do it anyway. We'll do an Executive order. We'll see how it works, because it would be a really nice—I have a really nice, simple idea, but we'll go through this process and maybe, I think, we'll get it through Congress. We have a good chance. I think it will be very bipartisan.

And I just want to thank you all for being here as we stand up for one of America's greatest and most beloved institutions. It's called college athletics, which is true. It means so much.

I want to thank Secretaries Marco Rubio, Scott Bessent, Doug Burgum, Howard Lutnick, Linda McMahon for being here. And also, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, doing a great job. Governor Ron DeSantis. Senators Ted Cruz, Eric Schmitt, Leader Steve Scalise. Representatives Lisa McClain, Jim Jordan, Brett Guthrie, and Lori Trahan.

Thank you all for being here. We have some great people. Condoleezza, thank you very much. I see you over there. Great to have you. Great to be with you.

A very special welcome to New York Yankees President Randy Levine, a friend of mine for a long time. I used to sit with George Steinbrenner in the box. It who was one of the most difficult days of my life. *[Laughter]* I would always be—he'd like, he liked me. I liked him. But we both liked very few other people. *[Laughter]* And we had a good time, and we won a lot of games. Right, Randy?

Major League Baseball's New York Yankees President Randy Levine. We never lost one.

The President. We never lost, actually. *[Laughter]*

And a great champion of college athletics, former, as I just said, Secretary of State—a woman who's really respected—Condoleezza Rice. Thank you very much again, Condoleezza.

And Ron DeSantis has been working very hard with us, and wherever you may be, Ron—hi, Ron—and had some great ideas and some great coaches that gave him some great ideas.

We're gathered today to discuss an important threat to the integrity and culture of college sports: the inability to set rules on eligibility, transfers, name, image, and likeness, and more—much more than that—in the face of endless lawsuits. And it's, what's going on with the legal community is incredible.

We had a lawsuit a couple of years ago by a radical-left judge from California who decided, knowing nothing about football or college sports, that everything was illegal that was taking place.

And I don't think it was ever appealed. Nobody can find out if it was appealed or not, but you can win an appeal. I think I win more cases on appeal than I do in front of some judges that are not very good.

But the—it was a horrible, incredible ruling, and it threw the sports world and the athletic, college athletic world into tithers. And it's—that's where we are right now.

It's—crazy things are happening. Young people are being signed, 17-year-old quarterbacks, for \$12 million, \$13 million, \$14 million. We have a 7-year freshman. You know? *[Laughter]* We have people, we're seeing things that we've never seen before.

We have college players that don't want to go to the NFL because they're making more money in college. Right, Jim Jordan? And a lot of really bad things are happening.

But basic questions, like who is eligible to play, are now virtually unregulated and decided randomly by judges rather than by reasonable, agreed-upon rules that could be very simple and very simply drawn. So this has grown into a major challenge.

We actually have some of the best sports agents here, because I think they'd like to see it solved, but maybe not. *[Laughter]* I'm not a hundred percent sure about that. But they're represented. We have everybody represented today. Just about every group you can think of.

But it's grown into a major challenge that threatens the future of college sports and, really, colleges themselves, because many are going to go—many are going to go down the tubes.

It was announced that Penn State, their athletic division, lost \$535 million this last year. Florida State, Ron and I spoke about it, \$440 million loss. It was just announced that Rutgers lost \$95 million, and they're doing all sorts of things to try and save the ship.

And I think those numbers are nothing compared to what's going to happen. This is new. This just happened. Those numbers are going to go to levels that nobody's ever seen before.

If you had no salary cap in the NFL, you'd see staggering losses. We have no salary cap in colleges. Colleges are going to have—unless something's done, unless we solve this problem—and I think, probably, today, we're going ask for ideas that, you know, not that we don't have to take, we don't have to take months. We'd like to see if we could do it for next season. But we have, and we certainly have the brainpower. We have tremendous knowledge; far more knowledge than I have about this subject.

But it also poses special dangers for women's sports and our Olympic pipeline. Women's sports are being canceled all over the country, just so we understand. Women's sports are in deep trouble, other than one particular woman's team. That's Miami, where I have my granddaughter on the team. *[Laughter]* They canceled men's golf, but women's golf is doing just fine. I'm only kidding. I'm only kidding.

But they are canceling golf. They're canceling wrestling. They're canceling fencing. They're canceling, even basketball. I thought that would be maybe immune, but it's in trouble.

And it's all going to football. But ultimately, football is going to be the worst laggard of all. It's not going to be affordable, and it's going to take down practically every college. In my opinion, it's going to take down virtually every college, or every college that wants to be—they think they want to be competitive.

Under the current system, educational institutions find themselves in a financial arms race for athletes in sports like football and basketball, and both. I mean, both of them. But basketball's being hurt very badly. It's really, it's being dominated by football.

Last July, I signed an Executive order to stop destructive play—pay-for-play schemes that are all over the place and keep college athletics rooted in the traditions that made it great. I thought we had a great system, frankly. I thought we had a system that should have been appealed, and it could have been maybe perfected a little bit, but it took close to a hundred years. It was developed over a hundred years.

And one judge that knew nothing about sports, knew nothing about football, knew nothing about Olympics, knew nothing about anything just decided everything was unconstitutional. It's crazy. But only Congress now, it looks like, can deliver a permanent fix. So, Speaker, you and John and everybody else, including Democrats that are represented very strongly, we can hopefully get it done.

Federal legislation must allow college athletic programs to set commonsense rules—simple, commonsense rules—without endless litigation and establish a fair name, image, and likeness standard that eliminates the patchwork of conflicting State laws.

That's the other problem. All of these colleges, they're all in different States, and all the laws are different. So you've got laws that are totally different. Some one way. Some an entirely different way. While allowing the full spectrum of college athletic programs to thrive. It should thrive.

If Congress does not take action fast, it could destroy college sports and destroy the colleges that play these sports. They'll be destroyed. They'll be going bankrupt. Every one. So many of them.

No other nation in the world has built a system that develops champions in classrooms and on the field, producing Olympic heroes, professional legends, and the leaders of tomorrow all at once. I thought the system of scholarships was great. What do I know? But I thought it was great. And just one of those things.

I was with Nick Saban the other day, and you know, his timing is exquisite. He played, and he won and won and won. And when he saw this thing, he said, "I'm going to get out of this, I'm not doing this anymore." He's around here someplace. Where's Nick? Where are you, Nick? Right?

He—now, he doesn't admit this. I said, "How come you left?" Just—he didn't want to go through one season, because there's no better mind at this than that man. And he looked, and he said: "What a shame. What a shame." And he's going to speak about it. And I think you have some very constructive ideas, Nick. I think so.

No other nation in the world has built a system like this. It's so good. And we've thrown it right out the window. And I'd like to see you go back to something maybe resembling that and maybe pay for each player. Not such crazy pay, but just pay for each player. With every player, maybe the quarterback and the third-string lineman making the same. But you're going to tell us about it, and we're going to try and get it passed.

Our goal is not to go back to the days where student athletes were never allowed to receive any compensation. Although, not the worst idea, but I think a lot of people would overrule me on that. But we must pass reforms that protect the cherished American tradition of college athletics for future generations.

So I look forward to hearing from a lot of you. And I think a few of you are going to say a few words, and then we'll get to some ideas. And, I don't know, maybe by the end of a long session, if we need it. I'm here as long as you need me. They came to me. They said, "You're the only one that can do it." I said: "Oh, thank you very much. That's a"—I said, "Really, because I'm President." [Laughter] Okay? To be honest. But we have certain abilities, and we'll see if we can get it done.

So I'll ask in this order. Marco, you'll say a few words; and then Speaker Johnson; Randy Levine; Nick Saban; Charlie Baker; the Governor, Ron DeSantis; and Greg Sankey; Sarah Hirshland; and Pete Bevacqua. And they'll go pretty quickly, and then we'll hear from some of the people.

And we may have something come up that's somewhat of a miracle. There's an idea out there, and it—somehow, it's going to have to be arrived at, because there's no way this system can—will allow colleges to, in my opinion, will allow schools to live financially. It's not going to happen.

So, if I could, I'll ask Marco, you can start, and then Speaker, and then we'll go through the list. And then we'll take some ideas or questions. All right? Thank you very much. Marco. Thank you.

Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio. Thank you, Mr. President. And I'll be very brief. The first is, I think you've already touched on, and that is what a unique institution college athletics is to the United States. Very few countries in the world actually have something like what we have. And it's not just unique, it's really important. A lot of people don't see some of the aspects of it that are so positive.

The first is the student-athlete experience. There are literally thousands and thousands of young Americans who are going to graduate this year with not just degrees, but advanced degrees, and athletics made that possible. And the athletic support and not—and the academic support that they're receiving from these schools is extraordinary. So there are kids that literally would not have gone to college or may not have considered it, and certainly not the advanced degrees, without the help that this provides.

[At this point, Secretary Rubio continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

We all know the challenges. And what this system now needs is a system of rules and regulations, of guardrails so that everyone is operating under the same rules. And it's difficult to do because it's moving very fast, but you've got the right people in the room here, Mr. President, and the right leadership.

So thank you for caring about this, because it truly is important for the country and for millions of Americans who are fans and thousands and thousands of families who have student athletes in their family who have experienced this system or are going through it now. So, thank you.

The President. And Marco has a conflict of interest that he didn't reveal, which is a very serious charge, could be a criminal charge, actually, because his son is a very good player for a very good college and makes money with NIL.

Secretary Rubio. A little. Not a lot. A little.

The President. So this is a serious conflict of interest. [Laughter] But we'll take him. We waive his conflict, huh?

Please.

Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson. Thank you, Mr. President. It's an honor to be here with so many of the alltime greats. It's a treat for us Members of Congress. There's many of them around the table, and they're happy to be working on the issue with you and for you.

I would say people often say that Speaker of the House is the most stressful job in the world, but then I think of SEC football coaches, because they've got to win every Saturday night. And my friends who are——

The President. [Laughter] That's true.

Speaker Johnson. ——in those positions, I have a lot of sympathy for.

I want to commend President Trump for his extraordinary leadership, and he leads on this important and complex issue as he does all others: He sees a problem, he wants us to solve it, and he assembles the right people to get that done. And I think he really is the only figure on the planet who could do that. So I thank you for that, Mr. President, getting everybody together. One more issue that we'll tackle.

[*Speaker Johnson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Everybody here wants to see this American institution succeed, and we have that opportunity within our grasp. And we want to make sure that the solution we develop actually works for student athletes who are at the heart of this. And that's who we care about so much.

And we know that the foundation of any good deal begins with getting the right people in the right room. And this is the right room, and this is historic. And no one knows better than the man who literally wrote the book on it, and that's President Trump. And so I want to thank you for assembling us, Mr. President, and we look forward to the discussion.

I yield back.

The President. Thank you, Mike.

Mr. Levine. Thank you, Mr. President.

Speaker Johnson. Hit the button right here. There you go.

Mr. Levine. Thank you, Mr. President, for putting this group together. Leading up to this, wherever I would go, because I had an interest in this, both professionally with the Yankees have done and from my experience on board of directors of various colleges, everybody would say over and over again, this thing is failing, failing bad. And it's like on a hamster on a wheel. It kept spinning on the wheel but never getting off. It was never done.

And they told me, "Please talk to the President because he's the only person who will convene a group like this in order to reach a consensus to get it done." And he agreed to do it, but he said to me, "If I'm going to do it, it has to be bipartisan."

[*Mr. Levine continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

And we're all here to support that, to help that. And to make sure that it's just not business as usual, just an idea I have is maybe that an antitrust exemption lasts for 2 years to make sure that these rules and everything are really being enforced. And if they're not, we go back to square one. It will give the Congress oversight, give the President oversight, but it's time to move.

And, Mr. President, I couldn't agree with you more. Thanks to your leadership, we've got to move this really, really fast.

We have ESPN and Fox here. They're probably the biggest payers in this entire thing. And the fact that they're here and their voice is heard is great.

So, Mr. President, only you could pull this off, and we're grateful. Thank you very much.

The President. Thank you very much, Randy.

And Nick Saban, please.

ESPN broadcaster and former University of Alabama football head coach Nick Saban.

Thank you, Mr. President, for the chance and the opportunity to be here to speak with you today. But I just want everybody to know that I'm just a football coach. I spent my life—when they had—when we had the ball, trying to get a first down; when they had the ball, trying to get off the field on third down. So this is an unlikely position for me to be in to speak to such a distinguished group of people. Thank you.

But I come here today with a question: What are the guiding principles for the future of college athletics? All athletics. I'm talking about football, basketball, Olympic sports, revenue, nonrevenue, it doesn't matter.

[Mr. Saban continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

So I think we need to come up with a system, and we obviously have to do it with the President's leadership and also with Congress, probably, whether it's antitrust legislation or whatever it is, to allow student athletes in all sports, including women's and Olympic sports, to enhance their quality of life while going to college, but still provide opportunity to advance themselves beyond their athletic career, which is what the philosophy of college athletics and getting a college education has always been about.

And how much does anybody talk about getting an education anymore? Nobody talks about it at all, which is the most important thing any of these student athletes can do in terms of enhancing their future.

So thank you very much.

The President. Thank you very much, Nick.

Charlie Baker.

National Collegiate Athletic Association President and former Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. I especially want to thank you for putting me in the lineup after the most legendary college football coach of all time. *[Laughter]*

And I really want to thank you for your interest in this issue and your commitment to it. And I also want to thank you for the work that your administration has done on a number of different issues, working with our team and with many members of the folks who are in this room today.

You know, today there are more kids playing college sports than at any time in our Nation's history. There's 556,000 student athletes across all three divisions playing on behalf of 1,100 schools.

[Mr. Baker continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

So I am—I'm deeply grateful for your commitment to this issue. I'm thrilled by the folks you've managed to put around this table. I agree with others who said there's probably nobody else who could do that. And college sports was a great thing for me and my kids and my wife and

so many of the—I know a lot of kids who wouldn't have graduated from high school, much less gone to and graduated from college, if it wasn't for college sports.

It's a truly unique American jewel, and we should do all we possibly can to ensure its success for the next generation and the generations after that. So thank you again for having us all here today.

The President. Thank you, Charlie. And you're doing a great job. Appreciate it.

Ron, please.

Governor Ronald D. DeSantis of Florida. Well, thank you, Mr. President, for doing this. I mean, you have pedal to the metal on so many different issues, from national security to border to energy, and you're not taking the pedal off any of that. And you could be forgiven to say college sports is important, but your plate's full, and you've just added it to all the other things that you're doing.

And I thank you for that, because this would not get done without your leadership. You—no one else could get this group together. No one else could work with Congress to be able to do it. And so I appreciate it, because it is important to a lot of people.

I mean, we know this is out of whack. We went from a system where you couldn't give a student athlete anything. They could sell your jersey, you get nothing——

The President. That's right. *[Laughter]*

Gov. DeSantis. ——to now, quarterback throws for 300 yards——

The President. That's right.

Gov. DeSantis. ——and they go see the coach: "Hey, I need more money. Give me more money from the—oh, okay, I'll transfer." Or they get money NIL—"Oh, I don't want to play in that bowl game. Sorry, I'm just going to sit out."

And I think that that's been bad, certainly, for college football and college sports. But let's just be clear, a lot of the speakers have said, and I speak from being in the South, college football is king. It's not even close.

University of Florida's the reigning NCAA basketball national champion. The football team, I think they won four games. So, guess what? Are the fans happy being the NC—not really. They're mad, because football didn't do good. And football has been able to generate so much money over the years that it subsidized a lot of the other programs. A lot of these nonrevenue sports, people have had more and more opportunities.

[Gov. DeSantis continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And obviously, the compensation with NIL—I signed one of the first NIL bills, but that was, like, if they're making money off you, you get. Now they're doing, like, perpetual negotiations even more than pro athletes can do.

So I'm confident this is the group to do it, this is the President to do it, and there's going to be a lot of people in our country that are going to be happy when this problem is fixed. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you, Ron, very much. Very much.

Greg.

Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for convening this group. And I also think it's important to point out—you've been to Tuscaloosa

a few times for great football games, a couple national championships, and I think the power of your presence around college sports is an important factor in this conversation.

I had a knock on the door of my residence hall in 1983 by my baseball coach. I was a bad catcher at LeTourneau college. That's why I'm here today, because he taught me some lessons that had I not been in that situation, I never would've learned.

[Mr. Sankey continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

We want our Olympians to go through our pools and our track and fields and our volleyball courts. And we want young men who aspire to be in the NBA or the NFL to be educated, to mature, and to grow as they seek that achievement.

We ought to be focused on making college sports great yet again, and I look forward to being a part of this conversation moving forward.

The President. Thank you, Greg, very much.

Sarah Hirshland, please.

U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee Chief Executive Officer Sarah Hirshland. Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. Let me start by saying thank you, President Trump, and your whole administration for your continued support of both Team U.S.A. and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

I'm proud to be here today to represent Team U.S.A. And I will say it is no surprise to anyone in this room that we are the greatest sporting Nation in the world. Team U.S.A. is the most successful team in history, with more Olympic medals than any other nation.

[Ms. Hirshland continued her remarks, concluding as follows.]

We stand here today, Team U.S.A., in solidarity and partnership with the collegiate sports community to encourage Congress to pass legislation that stabilizes the foundation of sport on campus and ensures a healthy and robust ecosystem for student athletes across a wide array of Olympic sports and football, which is kind of coming to the Olympics.

Let me conclude by assuring you that American athletes are ready for this global challenge. In fact, we welcome it. But the pursuit of excellence deserves a system that continues to invest in them.

Thank you, Mr. President. And to our congressional leaders, to the college administrators, and to the many representatives across the sports industry who are here today, we value your commitment to sport, and we welcome your partnership. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you very much, Sarah. And we'll conclude with our little early speeches, but we'll hear everybody that wants to—if you have an idea—if you don't have any ideas, maybe you don't bother. Okay? But if you have something good—and maybe what we're talking about with the SCORE Act seems to have a lot of support. But we'll talk about that.

Pete Bevacqua, please.

University of Notre Dame Athletic Director Peter Bevacqua. Mr. President, thanks. Thank you. Thanks for having us all here. And a special thanks on behalf of Notre Dame for your kind words about Coach Holtz. I know he was a dear friend of yours, so we appreciate that. And this meeting is important. It's timely. I think everybody around this table knows that we need help to straighten this out. We need the help of Congress.

In this post-*House* world of NIL and compensation, we're finding ourselves in a situation where college football, particularly men's basketball, women's basketball, but particularly college

football—and I don't think it's any secret that people understand that so many of the decisions around college sports are driven almost solely by college football. And college football is certainly important to Notre Dame. We make no secret about that.

[Mr. Bevacqua continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And quite frankly, I think if we can't agree on regulations with real repercussions, and we go down the road of a free-market enterprise where college football continues to be a runaway train financially, I think there's got to be a commitment that if you're going to spend x on college football and y on men's basketball and Z on women's basketball, you should be required to pay some sort of percentage of that to reinvest into your own Olympic movement within your universities.

So I think this meeting, as I said, is important. I think we're coming to a point where we're going to be at no return if we don't get our act together and try to speak with one voice and solve this.

So thanks again, Mr. President.

The President. And thank you very much, Pete.

So maybe we have to start with a base because we—you know, I like to say the base should be what we had before, which worked so well for so many years, with scholarships. When I heard Charlie say the kind of numbers that was paid in the form mostly of scholarships, that was pretty impressive.

But maybe we can't go back. Maybe we have to go forward and what's happened is, sitting here with Jim and some of the people that are talking about the SCORE Act, maybe that should be the base, and maybe we should work off that.

But if anybody has any ideas, I'm—I mean, I'm just noticing all of the divisions, all of the people that have supported it, including the NCAA, the 31 Division I conferences, 23 Division II, 22 Division III, all HBCU conferences. I mean, a lot of—and a lot more than that.

So maybe that can be a base. That's the SCORE Act, which I know it's been—Mike has worked on it long and hard. We have a great guy, Jim Jordan, right here. He was a great athlete. He was virtually undefeated in college wrestling, virtually.

I don't know who was, there was probably one bad night, I think, Jim. Right? *[Laughter]* But he's a——

Representative James D. Jordan. There was more than one.

The President. He was some, he was some great athlete, some great wrestler. And that sport is being, you know, torn apart by what's happening right here. So——

Rep. Jordan. Well, it sure helped when you came last year, Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Rep. Jordan. It sure helped when you were at the NCAA Championship last year. *[Laughter]*

The President. Right. So, if we could go, and if somebody would have some suggestions.

Mike, do you like the idea of using this as a base, and we work off the base, or would you like to start from ground zero?

Speaker Johnson. Well, I think I speak on behalf of the legislators around the table that worked really hard on the SCORE Act and many who have been involved and brought their ideas to the table.

Our fear is that if we begin from scratch, I think everyone around the table understands we—this could take a long, long time. A lot of the debate and discussion and deliberation has gone into this. I got this one-page summary I'm happy to pass around. I assume most people around the table know the basic parameters of the bill and where we are.

[Speaker Johnson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

But maybe that's part of the discussion. Maybe we could—maybe the question is, not a rhetorical one, but a question for all of you: Does anyone have any big concern about what is currently on the table in the SCORE Act or have ideas on how to improve it?

The President. Would anybody oppose? I mean, most of you have studied the SCORE Act more so than I have. Would anybody feel strongly opposed to starting with the base of the SCORE Act, which has gone through a lot?

You would oppose it. Go ahead.

Representative Lori L. Trahan. Well, first, I'm Lori Trahan. I represent Massachusetts and appreciate being invited to this today. And I'm really happy to hear you talk about women's sports, in particular.

I played Division I volleyball at Georgetown. That's changed my life. And so, really have spent a lot of time on college sports. And I think I'm the only Democratic legislator in the room. I'm not going to pretend to speak for all of them, but I do think we want to solve college sports as much as everyone here.

[Rep. Trahan continued her remarks, concluding as follows.]

But making sure that we have athletes' voices mandated at the table. They're not here today, so I do feel a responsibility to represent those 560,000 athletes who are not here right now but making sure that they've got recourse if their NIL rights are violated or not upheld.

So—but let me just say again: I would love to work, and maybe the SCORE Act is the right vehicle that we continue to tweak so that it has a path in the Senate as well. I know that there's a lack of consensus on many of the governance issues, but we'd like to solve that with everyone here today.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

Mike, you might want to respond to that.

Speaker Johnson. Well, I—there's some good points made there for sure. And I think everybody has the same intention, as we want to protect women's sports as well. And I've got two daughters. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that.

But with regard to the patchwork of State laws, as many of you probably know, the SCORE Act addresses it because it creates a national NIL standard. And then it allows the associations the authority to make rules on transfers and compensation caps and the things that are really burdening the system. And then it protects those rules from being challenged under antitrust laws. So we create an exemption there for that.

So I think a—there, a lot of thought's gone into how to address it there. But, I mean, again, we have no pride of authorship here. We want to have the best possible product. So, I mean, the authors of the bill are open to good suggestions.

So, yield back.

The President. Anybody? Please.

Yes, Steve.

House Majority Leader Stephen J. Scalise. Thank you, Mr. President. And I appreciate you bringing everybody together, because I think we're all here because we have a passion to protect college sports, and we've recognized that, with this wild, wild west mentality, it's not healthy for the future of college athletics.

And so, bringing structure back and really bringing the ability for the schools to govern themselves again is what our intention was from the very beginning.

[Leader Scalise continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

We absolutely will take more input, but only input that grows the coalition, not detracts from the ability for student athletes to get that structure that they and the schools need. That's what the SCORE Act does. We want to move on it soon, because I think we all recognize that we can't wait another year and have this wild, wild west continue, and it will take the Senate some time to start their own process.

So I'm expecting we're going to be moving soon—in, hopefully, the next few weeks—on the SCORE Act in the House, and then keep this conversation going, keep growing this coalition to solve this problem.

Mr. President, thank you.

The President. Thank you, Steve. And we have to move it quickly. Otherwise, you're going to have another season that's a disaster, and it's not affordable by colleges.

Next to you, Steve, you had something to say. Thank you.

Atlantic Coast Conference Commissioner James J. Phillips. I did. Thank you, President Trump. My name is Jim Phillips. I'm the commissioner of the ACC. We welcome Kai this fall. *[Laughter]* I'll be her commissioner, so we'll look forward to seeing you out watching her play.

I went on a college campus 30-some years ago and never left until I became commissioner. And I will tell you, we need your help. We need everybody's help in this room.

There are six areas that the SCORE Act is the right piece of legislation. First, as been mentioned, there's a national law versus State legislation and patchwork. We have 37 disparate laws across the country, so what you can do in one State is different than what you can do in another State. That just doesn't work when you have inter- and intrastate competition.

[Mr. Phillips continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

Finally, the codification of the *House* case. And I—you know, heard the mention of hurting women's sports. I will say, in the ACC, similar to the SEC, Big 12, and Big Ten, we have added 942 new scholarships because of the *House* case. Fifty-six percent in the ACC of those scholarships have gone to women's sports. So the *House* case has not hurt women's sports. It has not.

And the idea that we can sustain this is just not—as been expressed, is just not feasible. So we need your help. We thank you for taking your time and assembling this crew, and we look forward to working together.

The President. So the concept of what we're doing, with your great experience, is a pretty good start.

[The participants passed around a summary sheet of the Student Compensation and Opportunity through Rights and Endorsements (SCORE) Act.]

Yes, if you could pass that around, would be great. This is a summary of the SCORE Act, which I think people should see.

So you like the concept of what we're doing?

[Mr. Phillips nodded his head.]

Very good. Yes, it sounds it.

Mr. Phillips. Yes, sir.

The President. Good. Thank you very much.

Please.

American Conference Commissioner Tim Perneti. I'm Tim Perneti, the commissioner of the American Conference.

Mr. President, thank you for putting this incredible meeting together. And more personally, thank you for your support of the Army-Navy game. Army, Navy are members of the American Conference.

The President. That's right. Thank you.

Mr. Perneti. Like a lot of people have said in this room, I had the same experience: College football changed my life. I couldn't afford college, I got a scholarship, and it changed everything.

And I won't reiterate all the reasons why SCORE makes sense, because there's a lot about it that makes sense. But what we have to remind ourselves, and there's a lot of businesspeople in the room, is we're not solving the economic crisis as part of it. Because we are in a real economic crisis in college sports. Like, we have complex challenges.

[Mr. Perneti continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

The reality of all this is going to take bold steps. It's going to take guts. And this has become a transactional business where commitment is flying out the window, but it's not everybody. The top 1 percent, which is how the industry's been designed—to serve the top 1 percent—99 out of a hundred student athletes in our league don't want to be employees, to what Jim Phillips said, and they signed up for a great experience. Like, our responsibility is to make sure we reinforce the mission and create resources around them to have the experience.

But that conversation, whatever side of it you're on, should be had to see if there's an option in the future to dramatically improve the economics for the industry.

Thank you so much, Mr. President.

The President. Well, thank you. And thank you for mentioning the Army-Navy game, because, as you know, we—I signed an Executive order to protect that time slot so that, during that, from, like, 3 o'clock to 6 o'clock or 6:30, I guess, we protect that space, that airspace so nobody can play a football game, and we have the Army-Navy game protected. Because the kind of money that's being thrown around, they were a little bit concerned that the Army-Navy game, as great as it is, may not do so well.

I think it would actually do pretty well, but we protected the time spot anyway so that, during that little period of time, it won't have any of this competition where lots of money's being thrown around. I think it was a worthwhile protection because it really is a special—it is a very special time and a special, very special game.

So thank you very much. Great job.

Anybody else around? Please.

Speaker Johnson. Mr. President, can I just, before we go.

The President. Yes, please.

Speaker Johnson. You're being handed a—you're given a handout that just has a quick summary of bullet points of the composition of the SCORE Act, for those that aren't familiar with it.

And let me just apologize. I think NIL has been abused, and my staff put my name and image on the top of it really big. And that was—[*laughter*]*—it's sort of ironic and not intended. Sorry about that. But the—*

Participant. You didn't get paid for it.

Speaker Johnson. Yes, I didn't get paid anything for it. [*Laughter*] Yes.

Yield back. [*Laughter*]

The President. Anybody else, please?

Secretary Rubio. Cody.

The President. Cody, please.

Double Eagle Energy Holdings Cofounder and Co-Chief Executive Officer and former Texas Tech University football offensive lineman Cody Campbell. Yes, sir. Mr. President, I would like to express my gratitude for your involvement and interest in all of this and especially, personally, the opportunity to be involved in the—in helping to find the solution, because college sports, as many have said, changed my life. You know, made me a better businessman, a better husband, better father, and made me better at life in general.

This is a complex issue. It's multifaceted. There are a lot of different perspectives on how it should be solved. There are a lot of different agendas that are represented in this room. And the SCORE Act is a good start. It gives us a place that we can build on.

[*Mr. Campbell continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

And so that may require you twisting some arms along the way to make sure that people work together and are willing to give a little bit and understand that this whole ecosystem of college sports belongs to all of us. It's a national treasure. It's a public trust, as I've heard Clay Travis say before. And I think it's very accurate.

And so it belongs to all the American people, and all the American people should share in it. And so I would just encourage all of everyone here, and I think that might even be a commitment that you could ask everyone to make, is that they will work together, they will compromise, come to the table, and be constructive.

The President. So, Cody, I know you have worked very hard on this, and, frankly, you know, you've been working on it long and hard, maybe harder than anybody else. I've heard your name mentioned more than anybody.

Could you use this as a base, and we all get together maybe as a smaller group and ultimately report back to the larger group and come up with something? Do you think this is a good base?

Mr. Campbell. Yes, sir. I think it's certainly a good base, and it's a great starting point. Again, the dynamics will be different in the Senate, and we'll have to build on it from there. And again, a lot of these tougher issues are going to come to the surface once we get there.

But absolutely, we should convene a smaller group that can work on those things and work on the compromise that they need to be made to be able to have a bill that can get 60 votes in the Senate.

The President. Is there any way we could go back to the old system, which I thought was fantastic, and do something with some compensation for the players and simplify things so that you'd go back to a scholarship system, plus some compensation. More minimal, but you know, a lot for a player? I mean, for the most part, they would consider it to be a lot, whether it was \$75,000 or \$50,000 or maybe more than that.

But you go back to that wonderful system that I thought we had until this judge decided to just throw everything out the window. And it's been worked out for years and years, and it was finely honed, and then, all of a sudden, we're sitting in this crazy never-never land where colleges are losing hundreds of millions of dollars and, in many cases, not even putting out competitive teams. It's incredible.

Is there any way that can work? Coach, we were together, and you had some pretty strong ideas. How would you feel about that?

Sports broadcaster and former National Football League and college football coach Urban Meyer. You know, as a coach—well, first of all, thanks for having us, and——

The President. Thank you, Coach.

Mr. Meyer. ——I speak on behalf of so many of my former colleagues that I visit them now and they're a mess. You know, I don't see coaches sticking around longer. You know, the coaches are getting paid very well, so they leave and enjoy their life because what they're dealing with is the loss of a locker room. The—you take away team, and our country's in trouble.

You know, I—my two girls played college volleyball, and one of the greatest interviews I've ever witnessed is she's at Georgia Tech and said, "I learned so much more on the volleyball court than I ever learned in any classroom," which I agree with.

[*Mr. Meyer continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So there's a revenue share that the universities get through their television contracts, and I know it goes up every year. That's their only financial—that's the only thing they're allowed to do for their student athletes. They can distribute that however they want. That's still pay for play.

But any NIL conversations, which NIL, I think we all got to quit calling it that. It's not name and likeness. These players are getting paid millions of dollars, in some of the stories I hear, and they're posting in Instagram for—twice, and then are getting paid \$1.5 million. So, the NIL, to me——

The President. [*Laughter*] That's crazy.

Mr. Meyer. ——NIL, in its purest form, is America. It's called capitalism. If you can—if you can make money upon your name, you should have a right to do that. If you're a gymnast, a volleyball player, a swimmer, a football player, and a car dealership wants to work with you, legally, in the business world, do it. That's what NIL should be. That's not what it is.

So you get rid of the collective, becomes an illegal entity. You—there's no such thing. The—even to this day, that makes my skin curl when I hear a collective. Get the donors out of it.

If a businessowner wants to hire Jeremiah Smith and pay him a certain amount of money, he's certainly allowed to do that. That's called capitalism. But the universities cannot arrange that and set that up.

The universities can simply make sure the kids go to school, make sure they graduate, treat them fairly. Make sure the women's sports, the title IX, I'm all in favor of all that. But they cannot get involved in the financial marketing of your players.

That's—let the market take care of itself. That's called the market. That's called—and if the collective—I think, if the collective goes away, college sports gets better immediately when you say that, if we have antitrust exemption.

The President. You know, it's—just sitting around and having watched college sports for so long with no problems, no problems. What this incompetent judge did to this game, knowing nothing at all about sports, about anything that we're talking about today, is a disgrace.

And it's going to be a very hard thing to put back together. We'll get it done. But what this person did to college sports is a disgrace. I say it.

And we've seen plenty of those type of opinions. I had one recently, and it's a gross incompetence, is my opinion. And everybody suffers, including student athletes, including women. Women are really taking the brunt of it, as what you were saying before. It was so perfect for women. It was so great for women the way it was. And now we have to come up with a whole new scheme to satisfy people, and there are going to be some unhappy people.

And it was working before. A person that knew absolutely nothing about sports made a ruling, and she turned the whole thing upside down. And it's really a disgrace, you want to know the truth. A damn disgrace.

But we are where we are, and we'll figure something out, and it won't be easy, and it won't be as good. In my opinion, it won't be as good as what you had before, including for the students that were getting great scholarships. And you know, some went on to professional sports, and most of them didn't, but they got great education, they got it for free, and they had a lot of fun going to college, and they learned a lot.

And they had great coaches, many of whom are around the table. And they learned more from those coaches, in many cases, than they learned in the classroom.

So, yes, I appreciate what you say. Don't forget, when these donors or collectors or whatever you want to—all different names for different people, but as that money comes in, that's also money colleges aren't going to get. You know, they're giving money to players, as opposed to giving maybe to the college to keep a lot of colleges going. And that's pretty tough also.

But it's just a shame, because I hear. I got involved just recently, and I looked at what's happened to colleges and to college sports. And it is colleges, because the colleges are going to go out of business, many of these colleges. When I look at what a person that's a judge was able to do to destroy colleges and college sports that were so good, no problems, it's very, very sad.

And, in some ways, I'd like to just go exactly back to what we had and ram it through a court, if we have to, because I'm not sure you're ever going to come up with a system that's comparable to what you had. And you know, in life, you like to get better, not worse. You like to go forward, not backward. No matter what you come up with, you've gone backward, a long way backward, in many cases.

Senator R. Edward "Ted" Cruz. Mr. President?

The President. Yes, please.

Sen. Cruz. Mr. President.

The President. Hi, Ted.

Sen. Cruz. I want to thank you and echo the thanks for bringing this group together. And I want to, in particular, underscore the urgency that we have heard around this table.

College sports is in absolute crisis. Every single week, we're seeing another program being canceled. We're seeing another women's team being canceled. We're seeing Olympic teams being canceled. And the current chaos, if Congress doesn't act, we are very quickly going to be in a world of 30 to 50 college football teams that are basically a mini NFL, and the Division II and Division III schools are going to be left behind. And the millions of college athletes who, right now, scholarships provide an avenue for them to get an education that they never would've had, that will go away. And that would be an absolute travesty if we let that happen.

[Sen. Cruz continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And so my hope—there are a lot of people around this table who care desperately about college sports. My hope is that you speak out to Democrat Senators and urge them: Let's come together and solve this together. And I think a solution, part of a solution needs to be on the cost side. And I think part of the solution should be discussing and looking at the revenue side. I think both of those are important parts of a solution.

There are a number of Senate Democrats who care about this but have not quite gotten to the point of getting to "yes." That's the single biggest challenge. And I think the collective voices around this table adding to the urgency, that if we wait another year, if we wait another 2 years, the programs in your State are going away, and the students in your State are losing their scholarships. And it would be an absolute travesty if we let that happen.

Senator Eric Schmitt. Mr. President. Thank you. And I want to underscore that sense of urgency on the Senate side. I do think there's a growing number of Senators that do understand that if we're—if you—if we're here a year from now, we're in a much worse place. If we're here 2 years from now, college football, or college sports looks entirely different, and it would be a disaster.

So I do think that that growing sense of urgency is important. I do think—I appreciate you convening this. You have unique credibility on this, not just being President, but we've spent time at the Super Bowl, watching the Super Bowl, playing golf: You love sports. You have credibility on it. You care about it. And I think that authenticity matters for the leadership that we need.

I do think that, if we're serious about this, the antitrust exemption matters for the governance side, but I think the revenue side is inextricably linked to the success of this. If you are losing money on a football—and I'm from Missouri; we love, you know, we're in the SEC. If you're losing money on your football program, you're not going to be able to subsidize the women's sports and the Olympic sports.

So I do think that we can come together. I am hopeful and optimistic by the people who are represented in this room and, as we move forward, that we can find a solution. We have to. This is not just because we like watching sports on TV, why this is important. There are lives that can be changed forever if we do the right thing. And I think that you've got the right people in the room, and I think you're the right guy to lead this effort. And we're here to support those efforts in the Senate.

The President. Could I ask Charlie Baker: Charlie, do you think we could come back to a solution or get a solution that was as good as what we had before or almost as good as what we had before or maybe better? I don't think better, but maybe. Would you say that's possible, Charlie? You're in the position to be able to tell maybe better than anybody else.

Mr. Baker. Well, I certain—first of all, I appreciate the question, because it's, at the end of the day, the one we all care about the most, which is: Can we create a system going forward that's

better than the one we have now? And I think the focus people—the thing about the SCORE Act that everybody needs to remember here is it's a comprehensive piece of legislation that deals with a whole series of things that I think everybody would agree are a problem.

The discussion, the place where the discussion gets a little more complicated is the issue about the cost and the revenue side and the implications of those two issues. And if I were to say to this group, where's the place to go, it would probably be there. And do I think if you could get that resolved, you could create something that most people would view as better than what we had before? I think you'd certainly be heading in that direction.

The big thing we all have to remember here is that the way it was before—and I'm almost 70, so I remember those days quite well—sports and media played a completely different role in our society than the one they play now. And the money piece, in particular, is—got to be part of the conversation, and that's got to involve the student athletes.

And your point, Mr. President, about coming up with a more structured way of dealing with that, I think, is a good one. But that's got to be part of the dialogue the—for the same reason that the revenue piece has to be part of the dialogue as well.

The President. So much money was paid to students in the form of scholarships. What was the exact number that you said, Charlie, before?

Mr. Baker. Four-point-one billion last year.

The President. Four-point-one billion was paid to the students in the form of scholarships. And everybody was happy. Everybody was happy. And now you've got yourself a mess.

And I think you should just go back to where you have and let some judge tell you, you can't do it, and you appeal it up, and you win at some point. Because I think what you had was a great system: \$4.1 billion. Everybody was happy. Now you have a thing that you're never going to so—you have a jigsaw puzzle that's not going to be put back together, and colleges are going to go out of business.

And I think you go back, and the players that got the \$12 million, the 17-year-old quarterback that got \$12 million. One got \$14 million. I hear they're negotiating one at \$18 million who's—they don't know if he's got an accurate arm, but he's got a strong arm, Coach. Accuracy counts too. They have no idea. They're going to give him \$18 million.

And you know what? Those guys that already signed contracts, you know what? Call that the lotto. They hit the jackpot. Let them have their money. You can't do anything about it.

But I'd like to see—and I'd tell you, I just don't think it's right that a judge is allowed, that knows nothing, is allowed to destroy college sports and colleges. And I'd like to see you go back to where you were, enhance it a little bit through some compensation, and let them take you to court, because no matter what you do, you're going to be sued. You can do a hundred—you could give everybody everything, and you're going to end up back in court, and you'll probably have a judge that doesn't know a damn thing. And it's a mess. It's a mess.

And I don't know whether or not that decision was appealed. Was that decision ever appealed? Does anyone know? Because I heard it was not appealed.

Rep. Trahan. I believe the *House* settlement is being litigated now because it violates title IX.

The President. No, but was it appealed, the decision?

Rep. Trahan. The—I—the *House* settlement, I think, is——

The President. The original decision by the judge from California, was that appealed?

Mr. Baker. [Inaudible]—back, like——

Rep. Trahan. Oh.

Mr. Baker. ——two cases previously [inaudible].

Rep. Trahan. Oh, okay. I'm sorry. I misunderstood.

Mr. Sankey. Yes, the answer is no. It was settled because it was, I think, the third case——

The President. Why didn't somebody appeal it?

Mr. Sankey. The prior case, which is *Alston v. the NCA* [NCAA; White House correction] was appealed to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court found 9–0 against the college position to defend the old system. So that's, I think the answer is the antitrust piece is the inherent problem in trying to create caps and limits. That's it.

The President. So the Supreme Court was responsible for this?

Mr. Sankey. I'm not the one who's going to——

The President. Gee, that surprises me. [Laughter]

Mr. Sankey. I'm not the one who's going to say that. I'm not bold enough to say that.

The President. Wow. What a——

Mr. Sankey. But I'll at least acknowledge the problem.

The President. What a mess.

Secretary of Commerce Howard W. Lutnick. Nine-nothing. Nine-nothing, with Kavanaugh supporting.

The President. Was the Supreme Court responsible for this?

Secretary Lutnick. Nine-nothing, and Kavanaugh supported.

The President. That's a shame. It's a shame.

Yes, sir. Please.

Big 12 Conference Commissioner Brett Yormark. Mr. President, thank you for bringing this esteemed group together. I have a bit of a unique perspective because, for most of my career, I was in professional sports. I became the commissioner 3½ years ago. I found a system that quickly was defined by unlimited free agency and no salary cap and complete chaos.

I am—in representing the Big 12, we are very much in favor of the SCORE Act. I like to say it's progress over perfection. And it provides, no different than what Commissioner Phillips said, the core principles of what we need to move this thing forward.

One thing that we didn't discuss so far today was athlete protection rights, which is obviously part of the SCORE Act. And there's a component there about regulating sports agents that we need to really look at. Now, I know we have some agents in the room, and I have a lot of respect for that industry, but right now they are taking full advantage of our student athletes.

Usually in the NBA or the NFL, it's a 3- to 4-, maybe 5-percent commission. In some cases, they're charging over 20.

We talked about the portal. Most agents are pushing our student athletes into the portal, and the recent numbers show that over 40 percent don't even find a home once they get into the portal. And because they're being pushed into the portal—and Mr. Sankey said it earlier—they're losing credits towards their degrees.

So we have a problem on our hands, obviously. And I don't believe in perfection. I do believe in progress. And I think the SCORE Act is a great first step for us to move forward.

And on behalf of the Big 12 Conference, we are all in favor of it, and we'd like to see a sense of urgency. We need something done soon, because if not, you know, our universities are going to suffer, our student athletes will suffer, and we need help.

So we appreciate you bringing us together today.

The President. Well, it's an honor to do it. I just hate to see what you're going through. I hate to see what's happening to our great—to our country, essentially, because this is our country. This is the youth of our country. And it's a terrible thing that's happening, because, you know, these crazy payments that are being made to—you're not—colleges are not going to be able to help themselves. Just like the NFL owners would not be able to help themselves if they didn't have a cap.

But you have a much bigger problem than a cap, and you have a complexity problem. And you have a problem where women are being thrown out of sports, like, at levels never seen before, and you're going to have other things that come up that nobody's even thinking about right now. And you're not going to be able to solve these problems. You're just not going to be able to solve these problems.

You know, Ted said something before, that the Democrats—I think Eric was alluding to it, but you have a lot of Democrats in the Senate that I hear are opposed to almost anything. So, if you do—and I have to deal with these people all the time. [*Laughter*] Okay?

You saw them the other night. They wouldn't stand up for a soldier that was a great hero and got the congressional Medal of Honor. They sat there. They wouldn't stand up. They wouldn't even smile. They wouldn't clap for a woman that lost her daughter whose throat was slashed. They wouldn't stand up. They sat, and they didn't stand up. They didn't do anything. And we have to deal with these people.

But, Ted, you said that there are seven Democrats that will not vote yes. Eric, you know the situation better than almost anybody in the room, except maybe me. I have to deal with it even more than you. But you know, if you've got all these hard-line Democrats that want to see everything fail, it's a problem. You know for a fact these people would vote no?

Sen. Cruz. What—we need at least seven who will get to "yes," because that's how we get to 60.

The President. Right.

Sen. Cruz. Right now, the SCORE Act has zero.

The President. Yes.

Sen. Cruz. So I'm glad——

The President. Well, I'm not——

Sen. Cruz. I'm glad the House is moving it——

The President. I'm not surprised to hear.

Sen. Cruz. ——and they've got some Democrats in the House. That's beneficial. And I think when the House passes it, that momentum is helpful.

And there are a number of Senate Democrats—I mean, I've spent literally thousands of hours negotiating with my Democrat colleagues. And there are a number who want to address it, but it is their political leadership that is telling them to stop. And so what has got to happen is, the folks

in each of the States need to say to your elected Democrats, "If you don't act, we're going to lose what is so extraordinary about college sports."

And it needs to be something——

The President. You've already lost it.

Sen. Cruz. ——that is in the middle that's a compromise.

The President. Ted, you've already lost it. You've already lost it. Colleges are losing 4-, 500 million dollars, and they haven't even started yet. So you've already lost it, in the true sense.

And you've lost something else. It's like, it's ugly what's happened to sports in college. Before, it was beautiful. It was a beautiful thing. And now it's very ugly. It's become very ugly.

And I think you're right. You're going to have people that will never vote for anything, no matter what you agree. You could agree to everything that's perfect, and they will never vote. And I'm not doing this as a—I'm doing this as a practical person.

No matter what you agree to, you have people in the Senate and in the House that will never vote for it, even if it's good for our country. Even if it's great for the player, great for the college, and great for our country. And they will still vote no. Because they're cuckoo. They've got problems. Maybe it's problems at home, Cody, but they have problems. *[Laughter]* So that gives us problems.

And I think what I'm going to do is, I'm going to sit down with some of the people in this room, like Urban, like Coach—a very fine coach, Nick, who won a lot. You won a lot. How many? Six national championships?

Mr. Saban. Seven.

The President. You could have done better. You had a couple of game—*[laughter]*. Did you win seven? *[Laughter]* What are you? Six?

Mr. Saban. Seven.

The President. Seven. All right. So I think he qualifies, right?

But I'd like to sit down with some of the very talented people in this room, and we'll pick them out. If you'd like to volunteer, volunteer. And I'd like to sign an Executive order that I'll write myself based on common sense, and it'll be something that people will be sort of happy about. Some will be sort of happy, others will be sort of happy, and maybe that's a good thing. There'll be a few people that won't like anything.

But I'd like to write an Executive order based on some of the very great talent in this room. And we will be sued, and we'll go before a court, and maybe, maybe we'll have a judge that's realistic, reasonable, and wants to do a favor for the country, because that's the only way this is going to be solved.

So I'm going to sit down, and I'm going to write an Executive order based on many of the statements made today, many of the statements I've been hearing over the last year about what a disaster this is for colleges, for the players, for the families—ruining families, ruining everything. And we're going to do a very well-thought-out Executive order. A lot of you are going to be involved in that. All of—anybody that would like to, just let me know.

And that'll be placed before the courts. And hopefully, a judge who's a real judge, a compassionate judge, and a judge with common sense will get it approved. And maybe it won't, and maybe it won't hold up. Maybe they'll say you can't do an Executive order, in which case,

you say, "Welcome to the court system of this country," which has gone totally out of control. Totally out of control. And maybe not.

But that's the only way you're going to get this done. So I'm going to write an Executive order. And the Executive order is going to be based on great common sense, and it's going to let colleges survive, and players survive, and let a lot of people be very, very happy. And let's see if we can get it through the court system, which we might not be able to do, in which case, I guess we'll have to meet again, and we'll probably be through the same system.

Look, if this doesn't work, colleges are going to be destroyed. Women's sports are going to be destroyed first before anything; before anybody, before anything. Women's sports are already being cut in every college. The first thing they're cutting, which is very unfair, is women's sports. And then they're cutting lesser sports. Sports that are very good sports. Great sports are being cut.

And you're going to be left with football, and the football's going to lose so much money that the colleges are all going to go bankrupt, all because of a bad number of decisions made by courts, including, I guess, the Supreme Court, if you say it was a bad decision in the Supreme Court. I think the Supreme Court ought to be ashamed of itself for a lot of reasons. Okay? A lot of reasons.

I've got to live with these people, and I say this, and they'll only vote bad, and I couldn't care less at this point. They have hurt this country so badly because they haven't had the guts to do what's right. So—and I can tell you about other things too, not just this.

So we're going to do an Executive order, and I think it's going to be an Executive order that the people in this room and the students and the colleges will be proud of. Whether or not it holds up in court, I can't tell you that. But you're not going to get it through the Senate, and you're probably not going to get anything through the House, because you have a bunch of lunatics that you have to deal with, Mike. And better you than me.

Go ahead.

Speaker Johnson. Can I—well, I applaud the effort for an Executive order, and I think everybody around the table is grateful for that.

Might I suggest, Mr. President, that while you're using the Article II authority, that we still work in the lane of Article I? The playbook has to be wider than that, I think. And so, what I—what I would suggest, and humbly before everyone here, is that we take—I think almost everyone around the table we've heard today believes that at least the SCORE Act is a base to work from. Can we still continue to try to work through that? We do have some Democrat support, and, as was said, we've got some fine points to get to.

Rep. Trahan. Would love to work with you on it.

Speaker Johnson. Okay. And what I think is, and what I was hopeful for is that the leaders around this table, representing such a broad array of interest and groups around the country and both parties, that the influence, collective influence of the—I hate the word "collective." Coach Meyer, I'm sorry. I keep saying—[laughter].

But the influence of all the people around this table could help us get some of those critical, you know, Democrat votes in the Senate. And I don't think we should or could abandon that effort. We try it. I'm an optimist, you know.

The President. I think you go both ways.

Speaker Johnson. Yes. Yes.

The President. Let me do an Executive order. You go ahead and play games with these people.

Speaker Johnson. Okay.

The President. Okay? I——

Speaker Johnson. We'll give it the quarterback effort. How about that?

The President. And give it a shot.

Speaker Johnson. Okay.

The President. And maybe the fact that we do the one helps you get the votes in the other. Okay?

Speaker Johnson. Great.

The President. Does that sound okay, Randy?

Mr. Levine. Yes, I think so. And I think, at the end of the day, Mr. President, as you've heard here, we need an antitrust exemption. And the only people who can do it are the Congress.

And I heard from all the Senators and the Representatives, and I agree, the SCORE Act is a start. But with your leadership, I really do believe we can move the ball. I have ideas, brilliant people here have ideas where we can add on it. And based on my conversations with Democrats, I think they want to do this. I think the Congresswoman said that. And I think that there's a way to do this. And your Executive order, again, showing leadership, stepping out is good, but I think we go on both paths.

The President. Don't forget, the Executive order can then be put before Congress, and Congress can vote on it. Change it a little bit, vote on it. But I'm looking to do it straight and let Congress go a different path.

And you know, you may get a judge that understands what's happening, and you may get some very good opinions coming out of a very smart judge who will be beloved all over our country, as opposed to hated and disrespected.

So that's it. So, Randy, could I ask you to do the following: Either a sampling of the room or get everybody——

Mr. Levine. Yes.

The President. ——in some form. Come up with a proposal. Play with the SCORE Act, or do something different than the SCORE Act, but maybe use the SCORE Act as a base.

I separately will get some of the people in this room, and we're going to do a really good Executive order. And maybe, Jim, we'll put that Executive order in front of the Senate and the House.

And who knows, maybe we get a vote, and maybe we don't. But I'm talking about not even going before the Senate and the House, just having an Executive order where we'll be sued, and we'll go before the courts, and here we go again. But I think, at the same time, you go down a separate track. Is that all right?

Speaker Johnson. Sounds good.

The President. Okay? Is that okay? Good.

Other than that, we've had a great time.

The press, we'll take one or two questions. Please.

Iran/U.S. Military Operations

Q. Thank you, President Trump. It sounds like the Russians are helping Iran target and attack Americans now in the Middle East.

The President. That's an easy problem compared to what we're doing here. *[Laughter]* But I—can I be honest? It's just—I have a lot of respect for you. You've always been very nice to me. What a stupid question that is to be asking at this time. We're talking about something else.

Can we keep this maybe a little bit——

Go ahead, please.

Collegiate Athletics Eligibility

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. My question is for—on eligibility. As you know, my son Joe is a high-level D–I athlete, third-year relief pitcher, University of Maryland.

The President. How would I know that? *[Laughter]*

Q. We're very involved in that.

The President. He said, "As you know."

Q. Because I've told you.

The President. I don't even know who the guy is. *[Laughter]*

Q. I've told you that.

The President. That's all right.

[The President leaned toward Secretary Rubio.]

The President. "As you know."

[The President leaned toward Secretary Rubio, and they spoke briefly off-mike.]

Q. Thank you. But the eligibility thing is a disaster in the NCAA. You have the red shirt system, you have the medical system. It's all being scammed, and in a week or two, division—the second division, D–II, is passing a blanket 5-year eligibility without medical, without red shirt. Just a 5-year eligibility. That can be solved in D–I with the commissioners in this room right now. Why don't we solve that?

The President. Okay. Thank you very much. I'd like to know the same thing.

You know why you're not going to solve it? Because we've had some very, very bad, incompetent decisions. Things that were routine before, that were solved long before, now you're into a brandnew system.

Yes, ma'am.

Department of Homeland Security Leadership

Q. Hi, Mr. President. Thank you. Could you tell us what went into your decision to replace Secretary Noem with Senator Markwayne Mullin?

The President. Ugh. Is it possible to stay on this subject just for once? *[Laughter]* You know, just for once. Boy, oh, boy.

Anybody have any questions on this subject?

Executive Action on College Sports

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. What is your timeline for either the Executive order that you just mentioned or the legislation that the Members of Congress mentioned?

The President. I will have an Executive order within 1 week.

Q. Well, would it take effect——

The President. And it will be very—it will be very——

Q. ——before the fall semester for colleges and universities?

The President. ——all-encompassing. And we're going to put it forward, and we're going to get sued, and we're going to see how it does. Okay?

But I'll have an Executive order, which will solve every problem in this room, every conceivable problem within 1 week. And we'll put it forward. We will get sued. That's the only thing I know for sure in life. And we'll see how we do in the court system.

Q. Would it take effect, sir, before the——

The President. But the courts have destroyed——

Q. Yes.

The President. ——the courts——

Q. Yes, sir.

The President. Think about it. The courts. A bad court system has destroyed college sports and colleges in this country and a lot of lives.

Q. Mr. President?

The President. Yes, please.

Additional Executive Action on College Sports

Q. Mr. President, how will your Executive order be different from the one that you released in July?

The President. You mean than the SCORE Act? Well, it will be a lot different——

Q. No, Saving College Sports.

The President. ——because I don't necessarily agree with the SCORE Act. I don't know it as well as some people in this room, but I disagree with some of the things in the SCORE Act.

Q. No, the Executive order you released in July, how will this one that you're writing this week be different?

The President. It will be more comprehensive. That was put out as a test, as a, you know, feeler. This will be much more comprehensive, because we've all learned a lot in the last pretty long period of time—6 months or so period of time.

I think we could do a very good document. I think we could do a document that works from a commonsense standpoint. Whether or not it's going to hold up in court, who knows? It's—honestly, it will depend on the judge. Maybe we'll get a wise judge. There are wise judges too. We've got some very brilliant, wise judges. Maybe we'll get lucky.

Representation of College Athletes

Q. Mr. President, why aren't there any student athletes in the room? Why aren't there any student athletes in the room?

The President. What'd she say?

Speaker Johnson. Randy can answer.

Secretary Rubio. "Why aren't there any student athletes in the room?"

The President. Do you want to answer that question, Randy?

Mr. Levine. We've made it clear, and I thought I said it before, that we have agents here. There are a lot of student athlete groups. There's limited room here. And after this meeting, we intend to talk to all of the interested student athlete groups to get their input because this can't be done without them.

But, at the end of the day, we had to kick this off and start it. This is the beginning. This isn't the end. I've talked to a lot of people who represent student athletes, and you know, there are certain interest groups that I'm sure would have liked to be here, but they'll have their opportunity.

The President. They're very well represented. You know why? Because people like Nick Saban and Urban Meyers and some of the people—all the people that I know in the room, and the people probably that I don't know, they all care very much about the student athlete, more so than they care about themselves. So I think they're really here in that sense. They're represented very well.

Peter [Peter Doocy, Fox News], I'll give you one more chance, because that was a bad question you asked before. Go ahead.

Q. We've already got a lot of sound bites——

The President. I don't want to leave him in the——

Q. ——about the sports.

The President. ——lurch like that.

Q. Can I ask one off topic?

The President. On topic.

Q. On topic. Okay.

The President. Which is unusual—[laughter]—for you.

Go ahead.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran/The President's Interest in College Sports

Q. Thank you. What is motivating you to do this right now? Because there is a lot of other stuff going on in the world.

The President. Right. That's right. It—there's a lot. We're doing very—by the way, in Iran, we're doing very well. Somebody said, "How would you score it from zero to 10?" I said, "I'd give it a 12 to a 15."

Their army is gone. They're just about—look, their navy is gone. Their communications are gone. Their leaders are gone. Two sets of their leaders are gone. They're down to their third set. Their air force is wiped out entirely. Think of it: They have 32 ships. All 32 are at the bottom of the ocean.

Other than that, they're doing very well, Coach. Very well.

We're doing—our military is doing phenomenally, and that's the big thing for this week. We seem to have a new thing every week. But the situation with a very bad and very sick group of leaders who were killing a lot of people. A lot of our people were being killed. They were being maimed. They were being destroyed with their bombs all over the—planted in roads, and we call them the roadside bombs—walking around without legs, without arms, face blasted. Killed many, many people.

And we had a choice. We could take it and go on like that for years or do something about it. And we did something about it. And people are very impressed with our military, and they admire our military with what happened in Venezuela and what's happening now, what's happened with the B-2 bombers before this, where they took out the nuclear capability or potential of Iran. I think our—I think we're, right now, we're a country that's more respected than we've ever been respected before.

I saw what was happening with college sports, and it doesn't sound very important compared to what's happening in Iran and other places, but it is very important to me. And if I can get it done, I'll get it done. Through bad—through a bad system, it's a bad system. Through a bad legal system, you want to know the truth, we have a situation that is almost unsolvable, and we'll see if we can solve it.

And you know, Peter, the fact is, we're talking about colleges that are going to go out of business by—many, many colleges are going to be out of business. This isn't just about student athletes. This is about our whole educational system is going to go out of business because of this.

So I understand what you're saying in terms of the level of importance, but to me, this is very important. Very, very important.

Thank you.

Okay. Thank you all very much. Thank you.

Participant. Thank You, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Senate Majority Leader John R. Thune; Claudia A. Wilken, judge, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California; Anthony Rubio, running back, University of Florida Gators football team; Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Slover, USA, who was wounded in the January 3 U.S. military operation in Caracas, Venezuela; and Anna Zarutsky, mother of Iryna Zarutsky, a Ukrainian refugee, who was fatally stabbed on a Charlotte Area Transit System light-rail train in Charlotte, NC, on August 22, 2025. He also referred to his granddaughter Kai M. Trump. Mr. Baker referred to his children Charlie Baker, Jr., Andrew "A.J.," and Caroline, and his wife Lauren. Mr. Sankey referred to Roger Kieffer, former head baseball coach, LeTourneau University. Mr. Bevacqua referred to Louis L. Holtz, former head football coach, Notre Dame University, who died on March 4. Speaker Johnson referred to his daughters Abigail Johnson and Hannah Johnson Cathey. Mr. Campbell referred to radio personality and Outkick founder Clay Travis. Mr. Meyer referred to his daughters Nicole Meyer Dennis and Gisela "Gigi" Meyer Pruetz; and Jeremiah Smith, wide receiver, Ohio State University Buckeyes football team. Secretary Lutnick referred to Supreme Court Associate Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh. A reporter referred to his son Joseph Fredericks, pitcher, University of Maryland Terrapins baseball team. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on March 9.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Saving college sports, roundtable discussion; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Baker, Charlie; Bessent, Scott K.H.; Bevacqua, Peter; Burgum, Douglas J.; Campbell, Cody; Cruz, Edward R. "Ted"; DeSantis, Ronald D.; Guthrie, S. Brett; Hirshland, Sarah; Johnson, J. Michael; Jordan, James D.; Levine, Randy; Lutnick, Howard W.; McClain, Lisa C.; McMahon, Linda E.; Meyer, Urban; Perneti, Tim; Phillips, James J.; Rice, Condolezza; Rubio, Marco A.; Saban, Nick; Sankey, Greg; Scalise, Stephen J.; Schmitt, Eric; Slover, Eric; Thune, John R.; Trajan, Lori L.; Trump, Kai M.; Wilken, Claudia A.; Yormark, Brett; Zarutka, Anna.

Subjects: College sports, efforts to preserve; Florida, Governor; House majority leader; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Iran, U.S. military operations; Medal of Honor; Name, image, and likeness (NIL) remuneration arrangements; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of Education; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Interior; Secretary of the Treasury; Senate majority leader; Speaker of the House of Representatives; Venezuela, U.S. military capture and exfiltration of President Maduro.

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