

(A) An assessment of the efforts of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs as follows:

(i) To develop and implement a system or systems, and processes to implement such a system or systems, to notify veterans who receive a positive adjudication for a service-connected disability and are not already enrolled in the patient enrollment system regarding how to enroll in the patient enrollment system, should they be inclined to enroll.

(ii) To pre-populate information in the pre-transition health care registration system required under section 1705B of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), using data available within the Department of Veterans Affairs, other Federal agencies, or State agencies or other appropriate commercial or publicly available information so as to assist transitioning members of the Armed Forces with completing the process of enrollment in the patient enrollment system, and to simplify and streamline enrollment in such system, including—

(I) a description of any roadblocks to populating such information;

(II) a description of any challenges in receiving relevant information from any Federal agency or State agency; and

(III) an identification of any legislative action that may be required to improve the collection of data necessary to carry out this clause.

(B) An assessment of any challenges experienced by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in receiving timely and reliable electronic information, data feeds, and notifications from the Department of Defense, other Federal agencies, or non-Federal entities regarding the separation from the Armed Forces of members of the Armed Forces, including—

(i) specific requests for legislative action to improve data transmission from the Department of Defense or other Federal agencies to the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(ii) a description of policy reforms to require the military departments to report to the Secretary of Defense known or anticipated separations in a more timely manner.

(C) The identification of an individual in a Senior Executive Service position (as defined in section 3132(a) of title 5, United States Code), or equivalent, and office within the Department of Veterans Affairs that is coordinating or will coordinate all programs of the Department relating to improving the registration and enrollment of transitioning or transitioned members of the Armed Forces in health care services of the Department (including pursuant to this section and the amendments made by this section) and the usage by such members of those services, to include the following programs and offices:

(i) The Solid Start program of the Department under section 6320 of title 38, United States Code.

(ii) The Federal Recovery Consultant Office of the Department.

(iii) The Post-9/11 Military2VA Case Management Program of the Department.

(iv) The Liaison Program of the Department.

(v) The Concierge for Care Program of the Department.

(vi) The office of the Department responsible for carrying out the pre-transition health care registration system under section 1705B of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1).

(vii) Other similar or successor programs or offices of the Department.

(D) A description of how the individual and office identified under subparagraph (C) manages or will manage various programs across the Department, to include—

(i) programs under the Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration, and other entities of the Department that have different reporting chains;

(ii) an identification of metrics that are used or will be used to monitor program goals;

(iii) an identification of steps that can be taken to improve management and outcomes of such programs, to include collaboration and coordination with relevant programs of the Department of Defense; and

(iv) an organizational chart to show how efforts described under this subparagraph are managed across the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(h) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to require any member of the Armed Forces, former member of the Armed Forces, or veteran to use any service of the Department of Veterans Affairs or to enroll in the patient enrollment system.

(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.**—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans Affairs’ of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans Affairs’ of the House of Representatives.

(2) **PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM.**—The term “patient enrollment system” means the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department established and operated under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code.

**SA 5829.** Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. CRAMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle E of title V, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_.** **PRESENTATION TO PROMOTE BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO VETERANS IN PRESEPARATION COUNSELING UNDER THE TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1142(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(20) A presentation that promotes the benefits available to veterans under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Such presentation—

“(A) shall be standardized;

“(B) shall, before implementation, be reviewed and approved by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in collaboration with veterans service organizations that provide claims assistance under the benefits delivery at discharge program of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

“(C) shall be submitted by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives for review at least 90 days before implementation;

“(D) where available, shall be presented with the participation of—

“(i) a representative of a veterans service organization recognized under section 5902 of title 38; or

“(ii) an individual—

“(I) recognized under section 5903 of such title; and

“(II) authorized by the Secretary concerned to so participate;

“(E) shall include information on how a veterans service organization may assist the member in filing a claim described in paragraph (19);

“(F) may not encourage the member to join a particular veterans service organization; and

“(G) may not exceed one hour in duration.”.

(b) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Not less than frequently than once each year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that—

(1) identifies each veterans service organization that participated in a presentation under paragraph (20) of section 1142(b) of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsection (a);

(2) contains the number of members of the Armed Forces who attended such presentations; and

(3) includes any recommendations of the Secretary regarding changes to such presentation or to such paragraph.

**AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I have three requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 3 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

The Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 4:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

**ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2026**

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session to resume

consideration of the Steel nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during Monday's session of the Senate ripen at 11:45 a.m., and if cloture is invoked on the Steel nomination, the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at 2:15 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday's session of the Senate, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 4177

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I want to bring up a subject today that is close and dear to my heart. You know, four things that made this country strong—make it the best country in the world—is God, family, military, and sports.

You learn a lot of things out of those four. It makes us strong, and we have kept that pretty much in that order for a long, long time.

But I would like to say today that I think most—even some of my colleagues in here today—college sports is in trouble, not just men but also women. Before I was elected, I spent 40 years coaching. I coached girls basketball. That was a thrill. I coached college football for a long time as assistant and head coach—best job I ever had.

But it is not about championships or packed stadiums or television. It is the best job because you had an opportunity to help people—young people—get them on the right track. And that is what sports does.

As a coach, you are just not calling plays on Saturday. That is just a small part of the job. You are helping young people prepare for life after the whistle. You are teaching discipline, accountability. You are teaching young men and women how to make a good decision under pressure, how to handle success and how to handle failure and how to keep their word when things get bad.

But above all, you are helping them to succeed in the classroom. You are making sure that they go to class, stay academically eligible, and leave school with something more than a letter jacket. That is what college athletics is supposed to be about.

It is supposed to give young people the opportunity to compete at the

highest level and have an ultimate goal. But the ultimate goal that I always taught my players—and I think most coaches have—is not just the sports end of it but get a good education.

College athletics should be a pathway to a degree, a meaningful career, and a better future long after the final whistle blows.

The lessons learned through sports—discipline, accountability, teamwork, perseverance—they really matter. But they are the most valuable when paired with education that prepares young people for life beyond the playing field.

This is why the term “student-athlete,” not “athlete-student,” is spoken in athletics in college sports. Athletics should support education, not replace it. Education must come first.

I retired from coaching 10 years ago, in 2016. A few things have changed in the world of college sports since that time. A series of court decisions, State laws, NCAA rule changes have opened the door for student-athletes to profit from their name, image, and likeness—often called NIL. It has been a popular topic for now 10 years.

And let me be clear about this. I think it is great that students can profit from their name, image, and likeness. I am all for it. I was for them making money when I was coaching. They should be able to benefit from the value that they create.

For years, everyone around college sports made money—schools, conferences, television networks, sponsors, coaches—while the athletes were told they could not make any money. That needed to change, and it did.

NIL is here to stay. No one should be trying to take money away from student-athletes. It is here. But NIL is only one part of what has changed.

The transfer rules changed along with the NIL. Used the right way, the transfer portal is a good thing. It can help a young person find a better fit and a better opportunity and a fresh start. But without any real rules around the transfer portal, it has turned into something else entirely: constant, year-round roster turnover.

The scale of the problem is hard to put into words. I have never seen anything like it. Last year, more than 10,500 college football players entered the transfer portal—10,500—1 year. More than 3,200 of those were in Division 1. Division 1 is the highest level of college football. There are only about 130 Division 1 football teams, and each program can offer up to 105 scholarships.

So those 3,200 players are enough to empty out 30 complete programs of the 131. Think about that. It is amazing. That is like every football program in the ACC and the Big 12 losing its entire roster at the same time.

And this is not just a football problem. In 2025, more than 1,500 men's college basketball players entered the transfer portal. A Division 1 basketball roster typically has 15 scholarship

players. That means the number of Division 1 basketball players entering the portal in a single year is equivalent to more than 100 full basketball teams.

On the women's side, more than 2,500 basketball players entered the portal, including more than 1,000 Division 1 players.

That is not a few students looking for a fresh start. These numbers tell the story. What used to be rare has become routine. When I was coaching, you used to be able to develop a young person over a 4- or 5-year period and send them out in the real world as a man or woman with a degree, an education. And that is what it is about. I think we will all agree to that.

When I was coaching, you used to be able to develop a young person and saw them grow up every day. Now, you are lucky to keep a player one season, and I think that is what we are all talking about today—the relationship between athletes, coaches and teammates and schools are becoming shorter and more transactional.

Too often, short-term financial incentives are driving decisions that should be about education, personal development, and finding the right fit for a student-athlete's future.

Coaches can't build a program when the whole roster turns over from one season to the next, and that is what we are seeing. Schools are now forced to spend more time and resources recruiting their own players than coaching them, developing them, or helping them succeed in the classroom. They are not getting degrees now because of the transfer portal.

And the young people caught in the middle have no idea whether the team they just committed to will even resemble the team that they signed with. Young people are being treated like free agents instead of students.

And while older players bounce from school to school chasing the next paycheck, it is the high school student-athletes—both young men and women—who are paying the price. In other words, these high school students aren't getting the scholarship offers like they used to. The transfer portal is squeezing high school athletes out of opportunities.

We may not know the exact number, but the trend is clear: Thousands of roster spots are now being filled by older transfers instead of high school recruits. A scholarship that used to go to an 18-year-old with their whole future in front of them is now going to a fifth- or sixth-year senior who has already had his shot or her shot two or three times over.

This system is hurting the very people college athletics is supposed to serve. It has created a culture that rewards chasing the next opportunity, instead of honoring commitments, persevering through adversity, and finishing what you started. That is what sports is about.

It is not good for student-athletes; it is not good for schools; and it is certainly not good for college sports.