



# WELCOME

## PROTECTING COLLEGIATE OLYMPIC SPORTS

— An Interactive Session on What Comes Next —

JUNE 10, 2025 | NACDA CONVENTION | ORLANDO, FLORIDA



**Knight Commission**  
**On Intercollegiate Athletics**

A PROJECT OF THE JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION



**AMY PRIVETTE PERKO**  
CEO,  
Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

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## **BOB BOWLSBY**

**Member,**  
**Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics**  
**Former D-I Commissioner & Director of Athletics**  
**Former Member of Board of Directors,**  
**U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee**



## **BETH BROOKE**

**Member,**  
**Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics**  
**Global Business & Policy Executive**  
**Member of Board of Directors,**  
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# Agenda

- I. Session Overview
- II. Statement of the Problem/Consensus on Challenges
- III. Stakeholder Proposed Solutions
- IV. Knight Commission Incentive Proposals
- V. Poll results





**JASON HUSSER**

Director, Elon University Poll



**ELON**  
UNIVERSITY

Elon University  
Poll

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# Primary Concerns for Collegiate Olympic Sports

1. Reductions in funding and/or the loss of sports teams
  - a. **37 DI teams** have been dropped since the *House* settlement was announced
  - b. More than **700 lost opportunities**
2. Reduction of opportunities through roster limits across all of Division I = **15,000+ fewer opportunities** once the phasing in of roster limits has expired
3. Future changes requiring fewer minimum number of sports for DI membership



## Questions that could impact TEAM USA

- How will the scholarship and investment levels impact TEAM USA success?
- How could reductions in broad-based participation impact each sport over the long term?

### **Information from the May 20 Session:**

“The Future of Collegiate Olympic Sports in a New Era  
for Division I”

available on [knightcommission.org](https://knightcommission.org)





# 2024 US Olympic and Paralympic Collegiate Participation



- **593 US Olympic athletes**
  - 75% are current or former college student-athletes
  - Representing 172 institutions and 45 conferences
- **225 US Paralympic athletes**
  - 53% are current or former college student-athletes
  - Representing 94 institutions and 45 conferences
- **84% of all US Olympic medalists in Paris competed in college sports**



## DI Core Value: Providing Broad-Based Opportunities

- **227** Division I public institutions
- Providing more than **\$1 billion** in athletics scholarship funding
- Including funding for private institutions, this total is estimated at close to **\$2 billion**
- In 2024, more than **152,000 DI athletes** participated in college sports other than football and men's and women's basketball.



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## Proposed solutions fall into four categories:

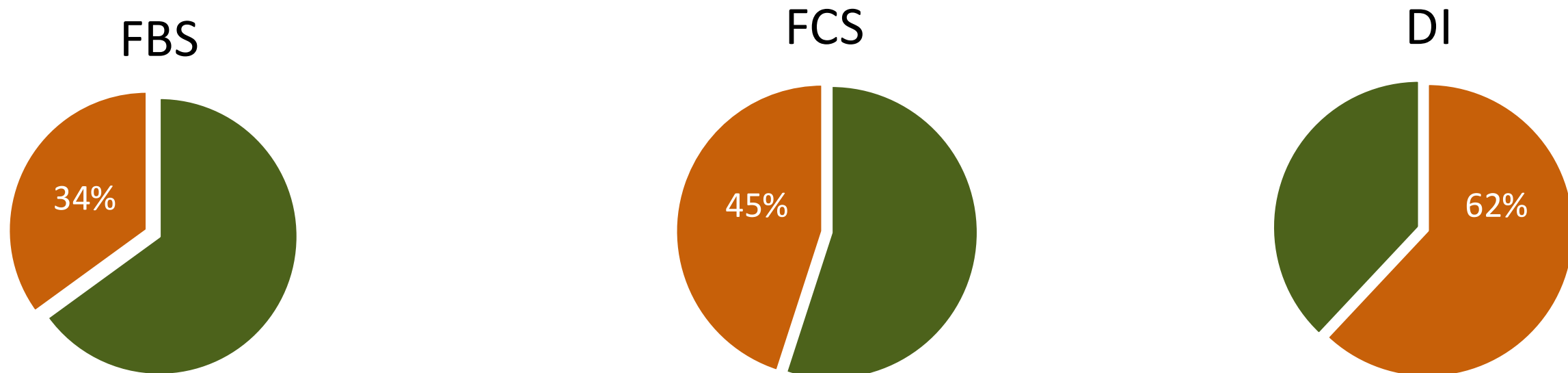
- Increasing awareness and education on the role of collegiate Olympic sports – youth to the Olympic podium
- Protecting current levels of support and avoiding significant cuts
- Creating cost certainty
- Enhancing revenue

## Proposal 1

## Intercollegiate Coalition of Coaching Associations (ICAC)

Codify through any future federal law a requirement to maintain the proportion of current spending on operational costs for sports other than football and men's and women's basketball.

Operational costs spent on sports other than football and basketball





## Proposal 2

### Intercollegiate Coalition of Coaching Associations (ICAC)

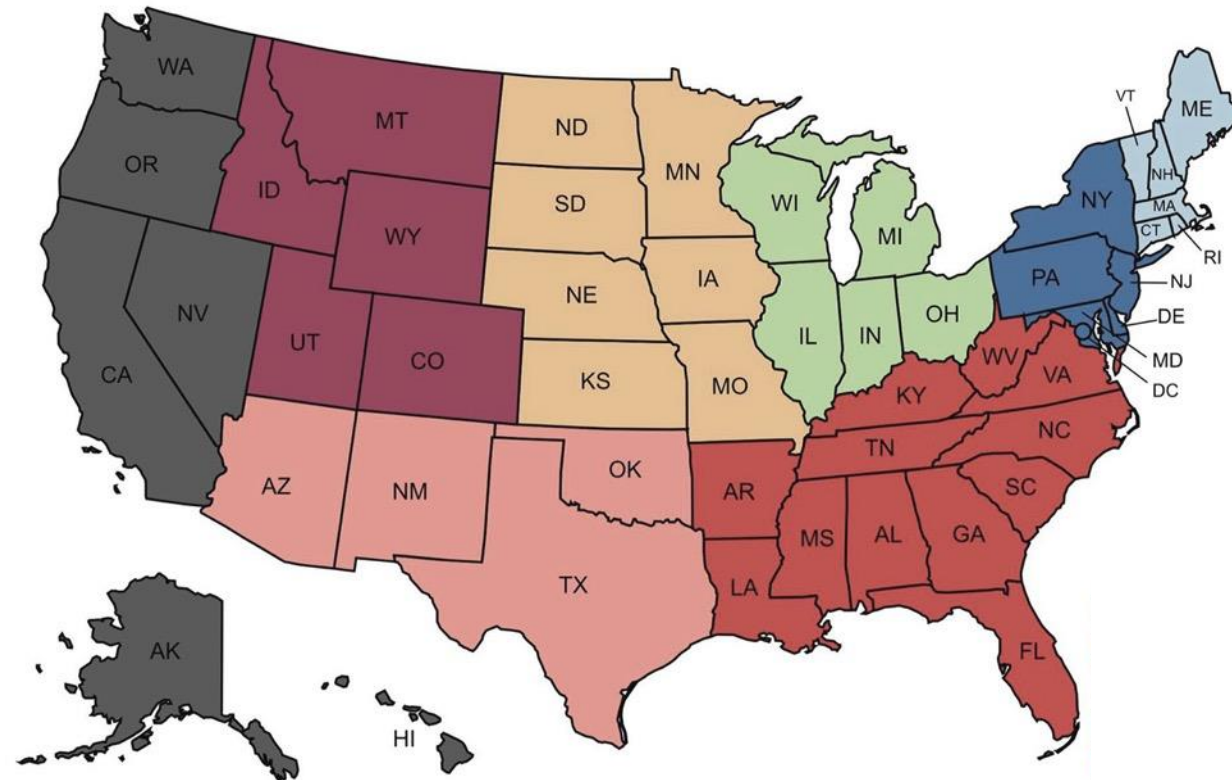
Through federal law, codify the current minimum number of sports required for NCAA Division I membership:

FBS Institutions:  16 sports

Non-FBS Institutions:  14 sports

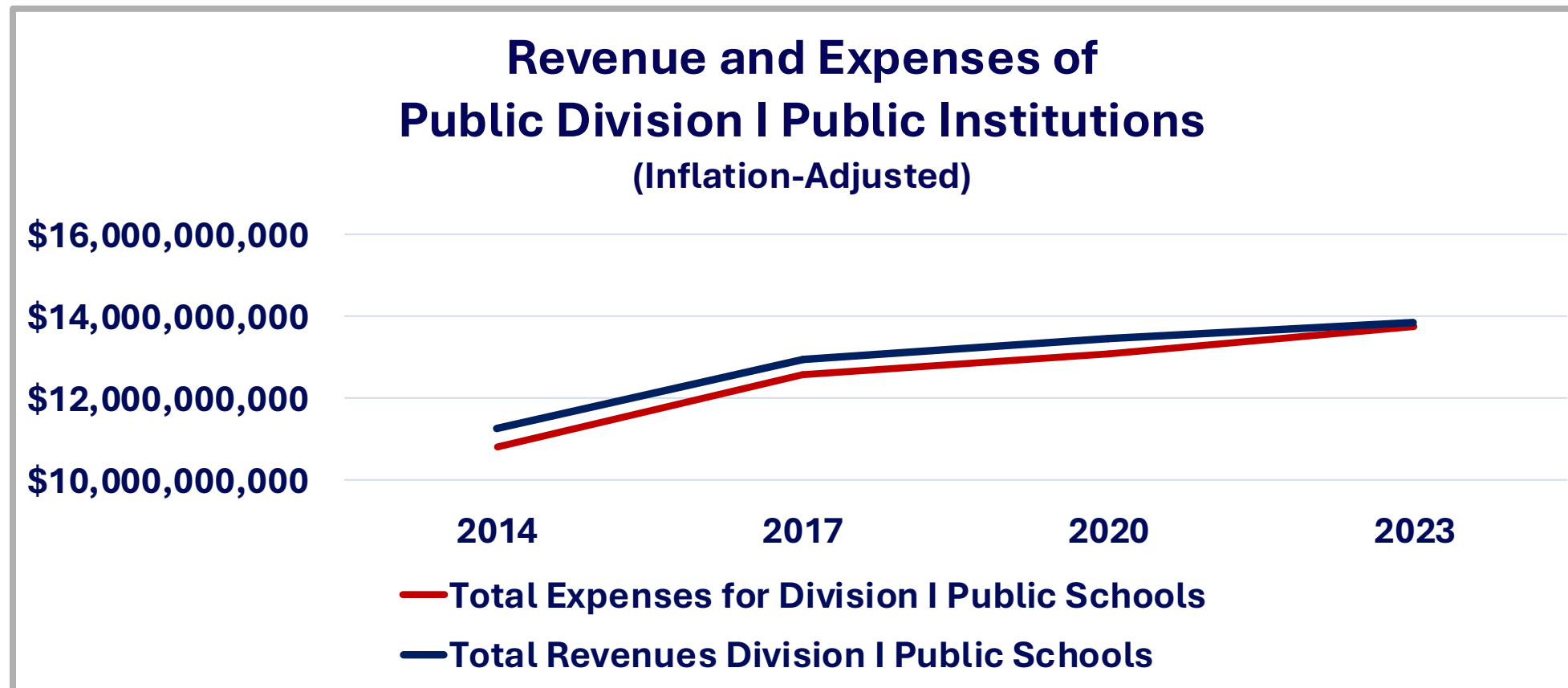
## Proposal 3

Find creative ways for multisport conferences to regionalize regular-season competition for collegiate Olympic sports to contain costs.



## Proposal 4

Find legal ways to create cost control measures.





# Principles to Impact Financial Framework

## Distribution Incentives and Spending

### Criteria include:

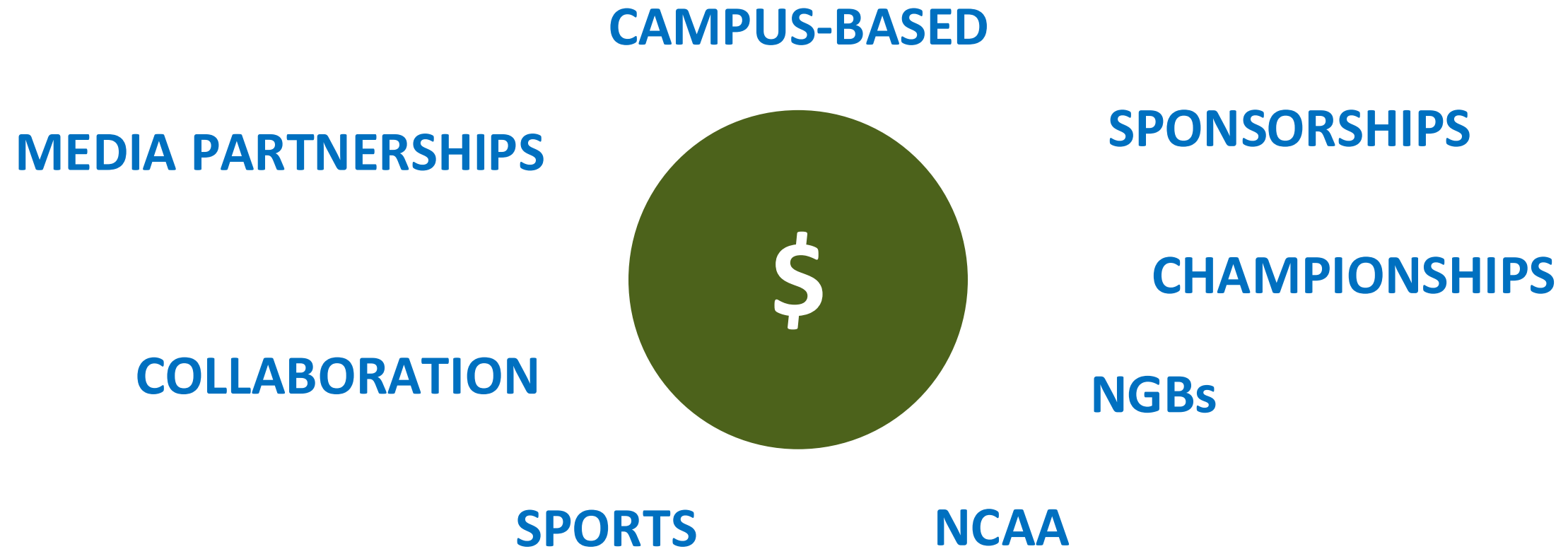
- **Incentives for Core Values of Education, Gender Equity, and Opportunity**
- **Financial Responsibility for Education, Health, Safety, and Well-Being**

A NEW REPORT IN THE SERIES: TRANSFORMING THE D-I MODEL

### Connecting Athletics Revenues with the Educational Model of College Sports

C.A.R.E. Model of College Sports







**Proposal 6**

**Sports Historian and Associate Professor  
Victoria Jackson**

Create a national fund to support collegiate Olympic Sports through existing or increased fees/federal tax on sports gambling operators.

**0.25%** current  
federal excise tax on  
sports gambling with no  
designated purpose

**\$370 million**  
collected in 2024  
(estimated)



# **Knight Commission Proposals for Opportunity Incentives**



# Understanding Current National DI Shared Revenues



Managed by NCAA  
(DI member schools and conferences)

Distributes more than **\$600 Million** annually to  
**356** DI schools;

Other March Madness revenues (nearly \$400m)  
fund all national services including FBS Football  
and 90 national championships for all 3 divisions



Managed independently by  
Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) Conferences

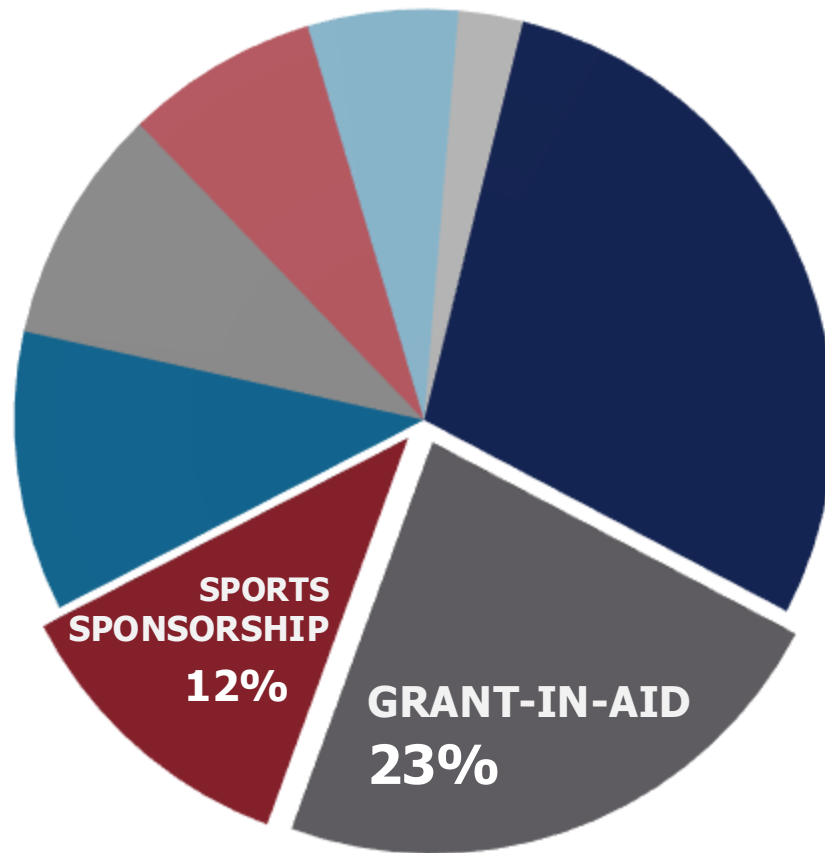
Will distribute more than **\$1 Billion** annually to  
DI FBS schools (91% to 67 schools in ACC, Big  
10, Big 12, SEC and Notre Dame)\*

NCAA receives \$0 in funding from the sport of  
FBS Football and absorbs significant national  
operations costs for FBS Football



## Eliminate FBS Football Factors from NCAA Revenue Distribution Formula

**NCAA®**



### Current:

The NCAA revenue distribution formula counts sports for which the NCAA operates and controls revenues associated with a post-season championship. The NCAA counts FBS football in its formula but neither operates nor controls revenues from the College Football Playoff (CFP).

### Proposed:

The NCAA revenue distribution formula should be changed to count ONLY NCAA Championship-related sports; **the formula should no longer count FBS football.**



## Eliminate FBS Football Factors from NCAA Revenue Distribution Formula

- Incentives for FBS football scholarships and counting the sport itself was estimated between **\$61 and \$66 million**\*
- **Proposal Result:** Value of financial incentives for sports other than FBS football (“collegiate Olympic sports”) increases by **more than \$60 million annually.**

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\*based on independent study by CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) using 2018 distributions





### **Create Opportunity Incentives in the CFP Distribution**

Similar to the NCAA distribution, the CFP distribution should include “opportunity incentives” that reward FBS schools only for the athletics scholarships they provide in all sports.

# Knight Commission Incentives Proposal #2:

## Future NCAA and CFP Annual Distributions



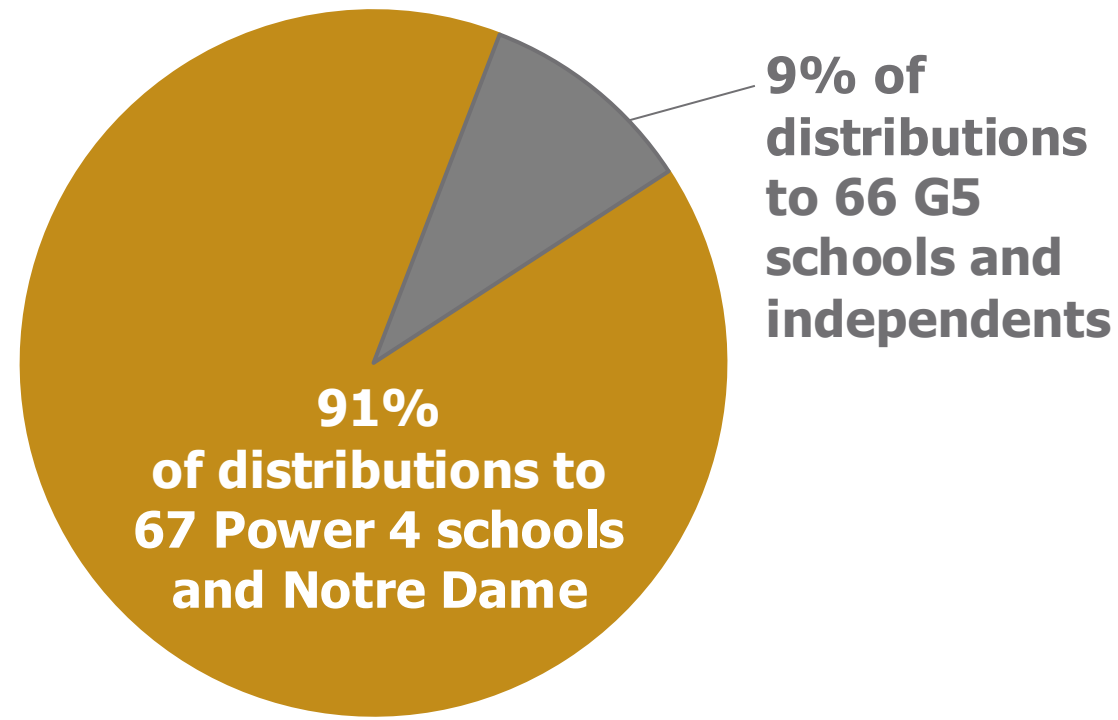
**\$1.4 Billion in revenue**

**\$737 million  
scheduled for  
distribution to  
356 DI schools\***

**\*Distributions to DI schools will decrease  
with plan to pay *House* damages**

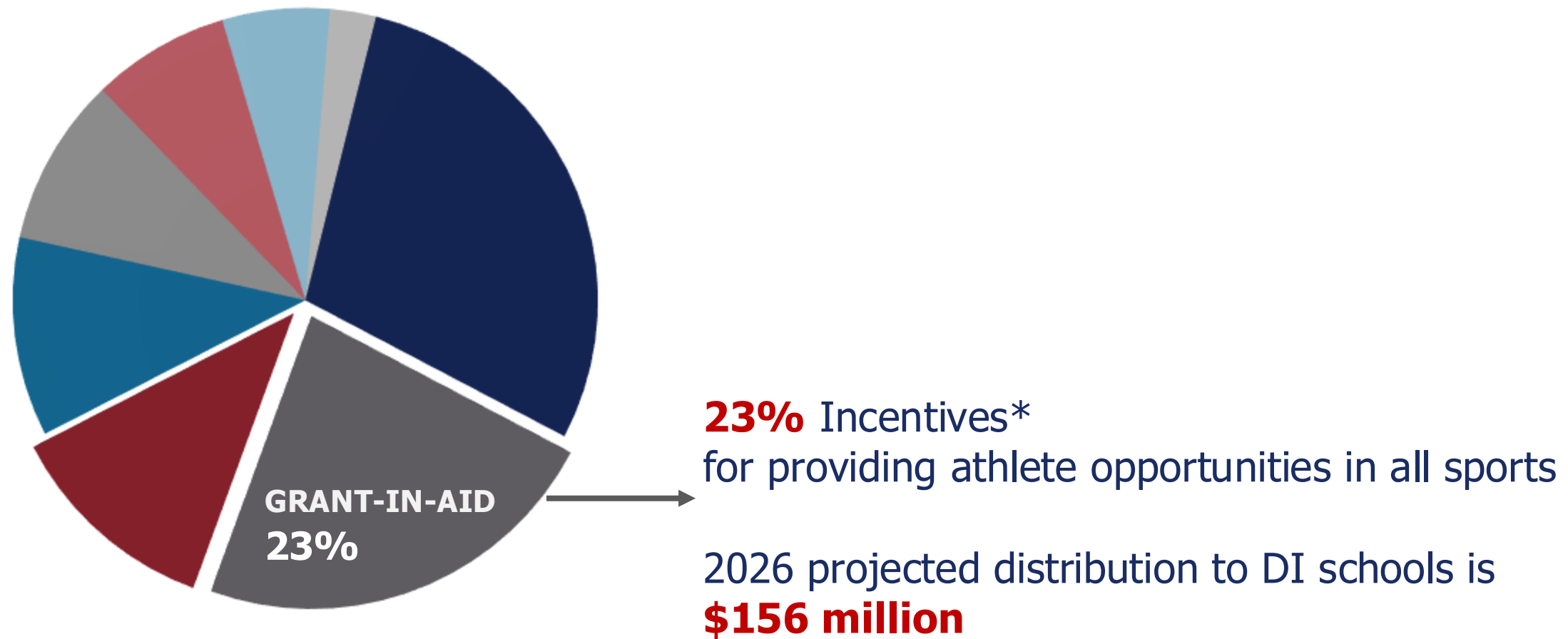


**Estimated \$1.3 Billion in revenue**



(per contracts and policies effective 2026-27)

# Knight Commission Incentives Proposal #2: Athlete Opportunity Incentives under 2026-27 Policy



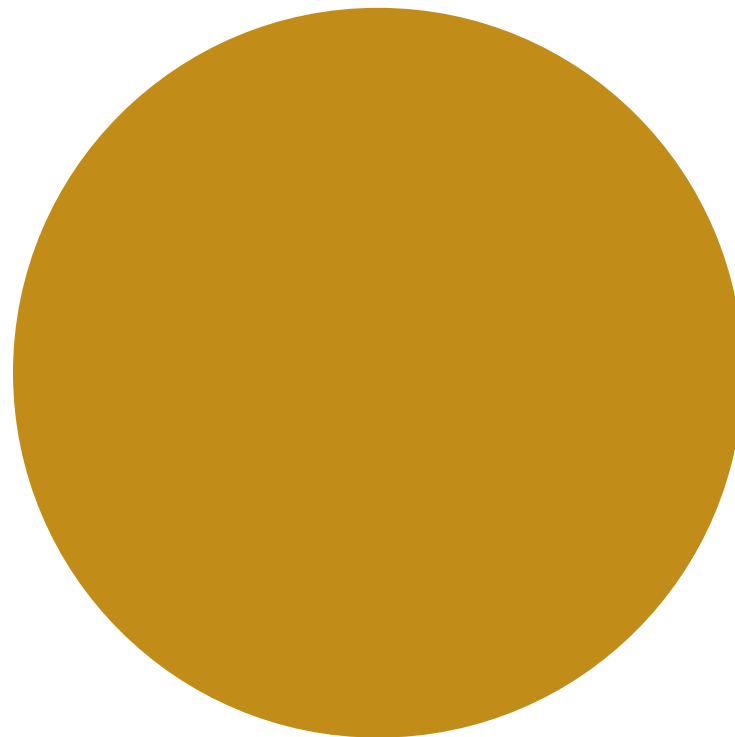
\*Under existing policy, institutions that earn such incentives may not receive them due to conference authority to redirect these financial awards.



COLLEGE FOOTBALL  
**PLAYOFF**

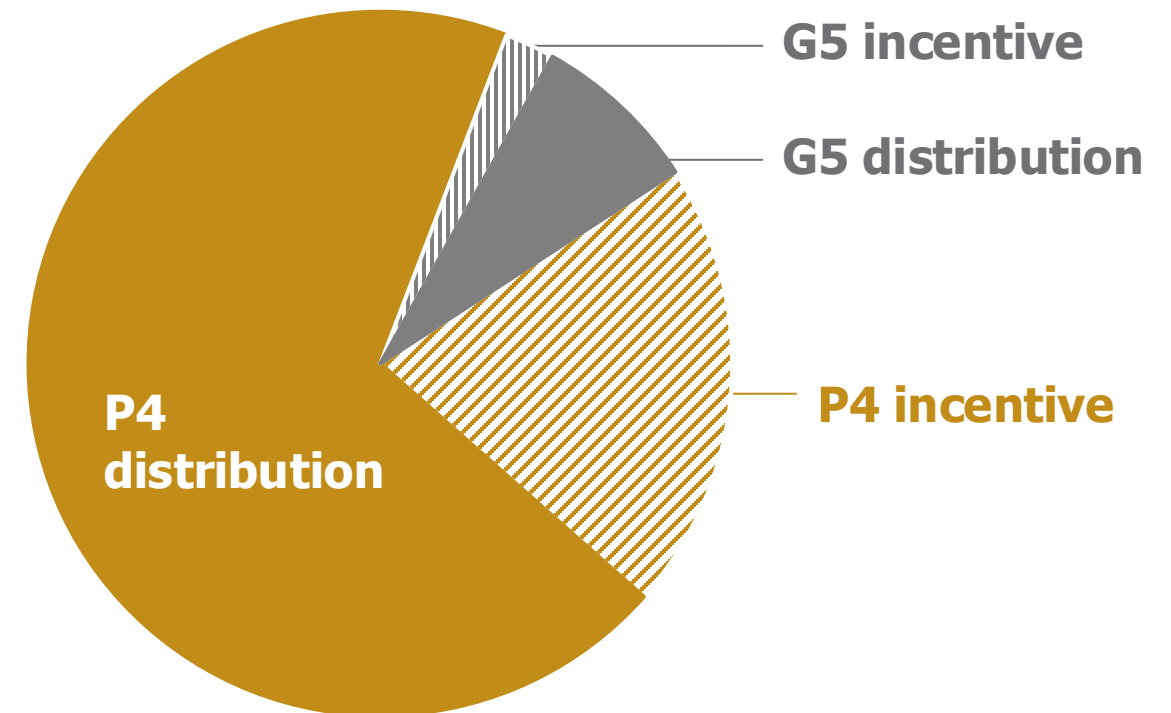
## Current

**0%** is designated for  
Athlete Opportunity incentives



## Proposed:

Award **23%** of the agreed-upon Power 4/G5  
distribution shares for Athlete Opportunity  
Incentives in all sports





## **SANDY HATFIELD CLUBB**

Managing Director for Strategic Initiatives,  
Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics

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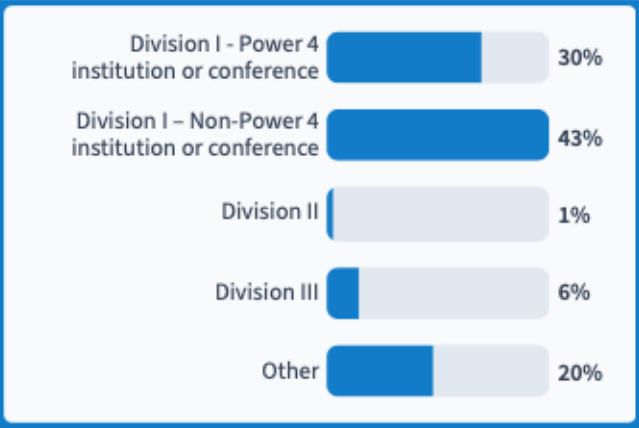
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# Test question:

## Which NCAA Division or Subdivision best represents your employment or area of work?



Response options	Count	Percentage
Division I - Power 4 institution or conference	38	30%
<b>Division I – Non-Power 4 institution or conference</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>43%</b>
Division II	1	1%
Division III	8	6%
Other	26	20%

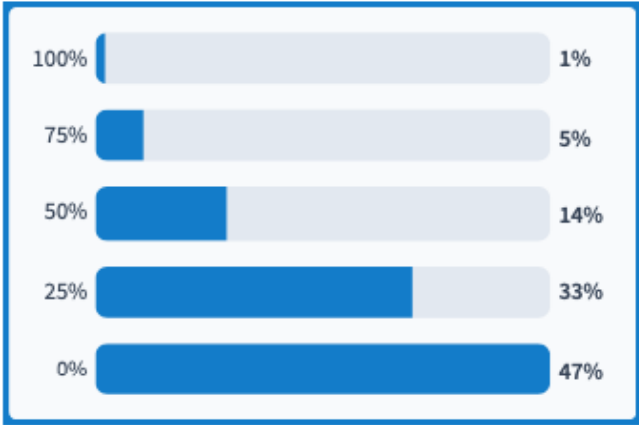
128  
Responses

THESE RESULTS ARE FROM THE INFORMAL POLL TAKEN OF SESSION ATTENDEES.  
RESULTS SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED AS A FORMAL SURVEY FINDING.



# Question 1:

What is your best guess on how much of the cost of the development programs for TEAM USA Olympic athletes is covered by direct funding from the U.S. government?



Response options

Count    Percentage

100%

1    1%

75%

6    5%

50%

16    14%

25%

39    33%

0%

56    47%

118

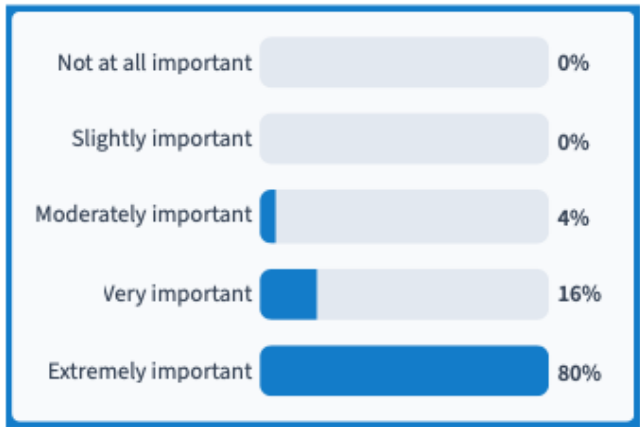
Responses

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# Question 2:

**How important is it for NCAA Division I universities to offer opportunities for students to participate in varsity sports other than those that are tied to generating revenues, like football and basketball?**



Response options	Count	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0%
Slightly important	0	0%
Moderately important	5	4%
Very important	19	16%
<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>80%</b>

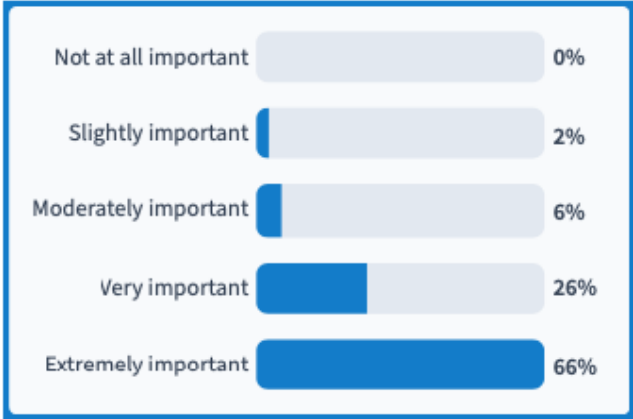
122  
Responses

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# Question 3:

**How important do you think Power 4 college programs in Olympic sports like gymnastics, hockey, swimming, and track & field are to the success of TEAM USA in the Summer and Winter Olympic Games?**



Response options	Count	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0%
Slightly important	3	2%
Moderately important	7	6%
Very important	31	26%
<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>66%</b>

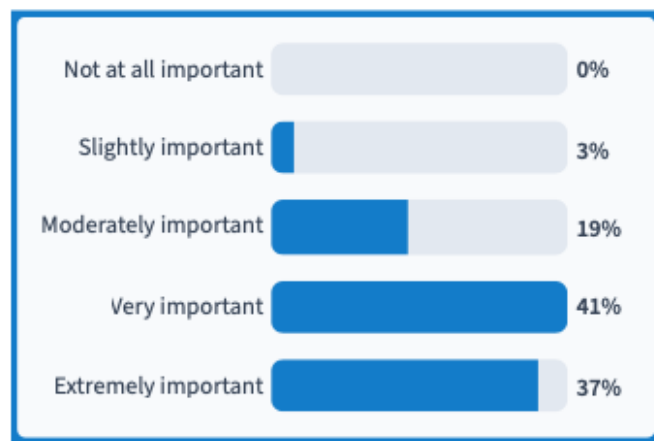
**121**  
Responses

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# Question 4:

**How important do you think all non-Power 4 college programs in Olympic sports like gymnastics, hockey, swimming, and track & field are to the success of TEAM USA in the Summer and Winter Olympic Games?**



Response options	Count	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0%
Slightly important	4	3%
Moderately important	23	19%
<b>Very important</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41%</b>
Extremely important	45	37%

**122**  
Responses

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## Question 5:

**In one word, describe the future of collegiate Olympic sports on your campus.**

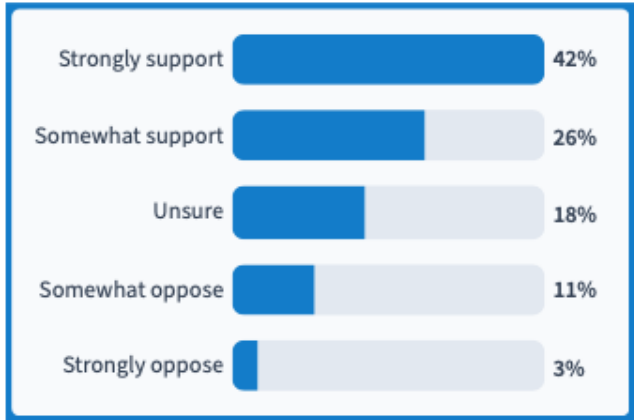


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# Question 6:

What is your opinion of the ICAC's proposal to codify, in any future federal law on college sports, a requirement that schools, at minimum, maintain the existing proportionate spending levels by subdivision on collegiate Olympic sports?



Response options

Count    Percentage

**Strongly support**

**49      42%**

**117**

Responses

Somewhat support

30      26%

Unsure

21      18%

Somewhat oppose

13      11%

Strongly oppose

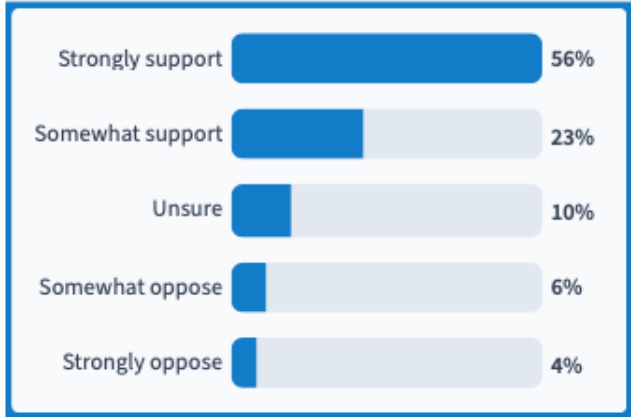
4      3%

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# Question 7:

**What is your opinion of the ICAC's proposal to codify, in any future federal law on college sports, the current minimum number of sports required for Division I membership as specified in NCAA Bylaw 20 (16 sports for FBS and 14 sports for non-FBS schools)**



Response options

Count    Percentage

**Strongly support**

**64        56%**

**115**

Somewhat support

27        23%

Responses

Unsure

12        10%

Somewhat oppose

7         6%

Strongly oppose

5         4%

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# Question 8:

How important is it to find legal ways to institute cost controls for the operation of collegiate Olympic sports?



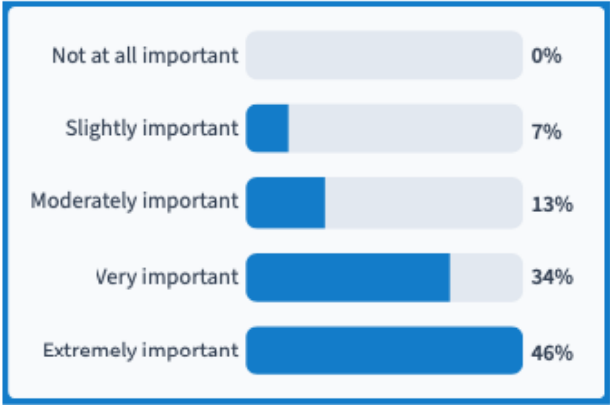
Response options	Count	Percentage	112 Responses
Not at all important	5	4%	
Slightly important	10	9%	
Moderately important	22	20%	
<b>Very important</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>41%</b>	
Extremely important	29	26%	

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# Question 9:

**How important is it for multisport conferences to find creative ways to regionalize regular season competition in sports other than FBS football and DI basketball to contain costs?**



Response options	Count	Percentage
Not at all important	0	0%
Slightly important	8	7%
Moderately important	15	13%
Very important	39	34%
<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>46%</b>

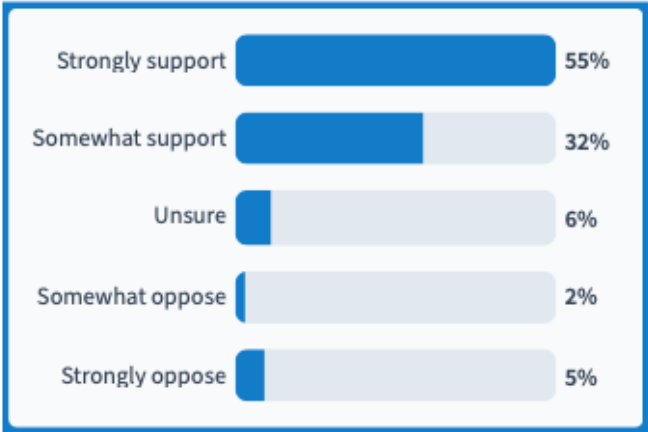
**115**  
Responses

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# Question 10:

**What is your opinion of using a fee or federal tax on sports gambling operators to create a national fund to support collegiate Olympic sports that develop USA Olympic national team members?**



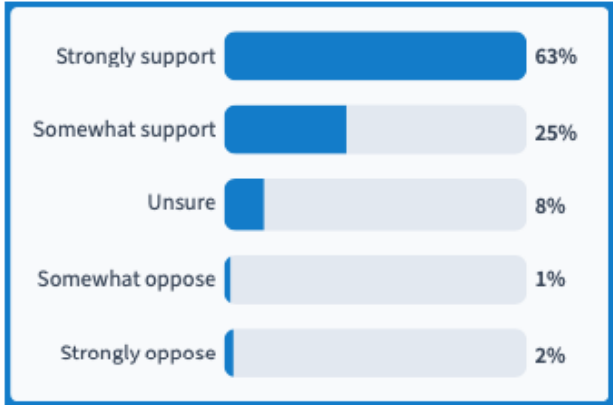
Response options	Count	Percentage	113 Responses
Strongly support	62	55%	
Somewhat support	36	32%	
Unsure	7	6%	
Somewhat oppose	2	2%	
Strongly oppose	6	5%	

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# Question 11:

What is your opinion of the Knight Commission proposal that the NCAA eliminates factors related to the sport of FBS football in its annual NCAA revenue distribution plan?



Response options

**Strongly support**

Somewhat support

Unsure

Somewhat oppose

Strongly oppose

Count    Percentage

**55        63%**

22        25%

7         8%

1         1%

2         2%

**87**  
Responses

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# Question 12:

**What is your opinion of the Knight Commission proposal for the CFP revenue distribution formula to add "opportunity incentives" that reward FBS schools for the athletics scholarships they provide in all sports, similar to the NCAA?**

Response options	Count	Percentage	86 Responses
<b>Strongly support</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51%</b>	
Somewhat support	22	26%	
Unsure	12	14%	
Somewhat oppose	5	6%	
Strongly oppose	3	3%	

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# THANK YOU

**FOR SESSION RESOURCES & MORE INFORMATION**  
visit *[knightcommission.org](https://knightcommission.org)*



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