

PRESS RELEASE

Congressman Gary G. Miller
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Members of Congress Urge BCS Committee to Consider a More Equitable System in College Football

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Reps. Gary Miller (R-CA), Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Joe Barton (R-TX), and five of their colleagues sent a letter to Bowl Championship Series (BCS) Commissioner Swofford and BCS Presidential Oversight Committee Chairman Frohnmayr urging the Committee to consider a new, more equitable approach in determining a national football champion. In April, the BCS Committee will be meeting to discuss the future of the BCS system.

“While the current BCS system was created to identify a broadly accepted national champion, its implementation has failed to determine who is without a doubt, the best team in college football,” said Congressman Miller. “There is no reason the NCAA should continue to disadvantage certain schools when every other major college sport’s championship is settled through a playoff. As Congress is currently working to address a number of critical issues this session, it is important that we tackle this ongoing problem. The lack of a fair, competitive, and inclusive playoff system in college football has simply gone on for too long.”

“It’s a matter of fairness,” said Congressman Abercrombie. “Teams from the six BCS conferences share the huge revenue that BCS games generate every year, while teams in the five non-BCS conferences are systematically excluded. One team from all five conferences may be selected for a BCS bowl game.”

“We are serious about trying to move forward and trying to encourage the NCAA to ditch the current BCS and go with something where the champion is decided on the field and not by some complicated computer algorithm,” said Congressman Barton. “Consumers are being deceived. The ‘BCS Championship Game’ is not a championship game under any sensible interpretation of the manner in which sports champions are determined. Remember, college football is more than an exhilarating sport; it’s a billion-dollar business that brings millions of dollars in revenue to the winning schools. It is not fair that so many schools start the season without a chance at a championship and the money and prestige that come with it.”

Instituted in 1998, the BCS is a five-game arrangement for post-season college football, favoring the six major conferences who each receive an automatic qualifying team and a pay-out of \$17 million, designed to match the two top-rated teams in a national championship game through a complex system of human polls and computer ratings, as well as create competitive matchups between eight teams in four other games. In order for an NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), formerly Division 1A, Football Championship to be established, the NCAA FBS membership must consider such a proposal through its normal legislative process. To date, legislation to establish a national championship has not been seriously considered by the membership.

Cosigners of this letter include Reps. Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Joe Barton (R-TX), Ken Calvert (R-CA), Mike McCaul (R-TX), Jim Matheson (D-UT), Gary Miller (R-CA), Mike Simpson (R-ID), and Lynn Westmoreland (R-GA).