

STATEMENT OF GENE BLEYMAIER  
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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,  
TRADE & CONSUMER PROTECTION

HEARING ON THE BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES: MONEY AND OTHER ISSUES OF  
FAIRNESS FOR PUBLICALLY FINANCED UNIVERSITIES

May 1, 2009

Chairman Rush and members of the Subcommittee, I am Gene Bleymaier, Director of Athletics at Boise State University. Thank you for inviting me here today to speak about the Bowl Championship Series (“BCS”).

The issues I would like to address with you today are the following:

**COMPETITIVENESS**

Boise State’s football team is the winningest program in the country over the past 10 years, with a winning percentage of .843 and an overall record of 108 wins and 20 losses!

In the past 10 years, Boise State football has:

- The nation’s best conference winning percentage at .933, 70 wins and 5 losses
- The nation’s best home winning percentage at .970, 64 wins and 2 losses

In the past 5 years, Boise State has finished the regular season undefeated three times, in 2004, 2006 and 2008!

Boise State ranks #8 overall in the country for the best all-time winningest football program – winning over 70% of their games.

Boise State has had no fewer than 5 games televised nationally each of the past 3 years.

**ACCESS**

Despite Boise State’s incredible success on the playing field, the Broncos have only been invited to a BCS Bowl game once following the 2006 season.

Annually, 10 teams are rewarded with opportunities to participate in the 5 BCS games.

In 2004, the Broncos went undefeated and finished the season ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the BCS. While Boise State did not get invited to the BCS, Michigan, ranked 13<sup>th</sup> and Pittsburgh, ranked 21<sup>st</sup> did.

- Boise State 9<sup>th</sup> excluded
- Michigan 13<sup>th</sup> BCS
- Pittsburgh 21<sup>st</sup> BCS

In 2006, Boise State went undefeated and finished the season ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the BCS and was invited to the Fiesta Bowl to play Oklahoma. Boise State defeated Oklahoma in one of the greatest games ever played.

In 2008, the Broncos went undefeated again and finished the season ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the BCS. While Boise State did not get invited to the BCS, Ohio State, ranked 10<sup>th</sup>, Cincinnati ranked 12<sup>th</sup> and Virginia Tech ranked 19<sup>th</sup> did.

- Boise State 9<sup>th</sup> excluded
- Ohio State 10<sup>th</sup> BCS
- Cincinnati 12<sup>th</sup> BCS
- Virginia Tech 19<sup>th</sup> BCS

Three times in the past five years Boise State has won all of its games and in the current system, never came close to playing in the national championship game. The BCS system not only restricts access but essentially precludes schools from playing in the national championship.

The BCS system is exclusionary and limits access to BCS Bowls to the benefit of Automatic Qualifying (AQ) Conferences and to the detriment of non AQ Conferences. The automatic qualifying criteria bestowed on the 6 AQ Conferences should be adjusted, altered or eliminated.

### **REVENUE DISTRIBUTION**

The BCS revenue distribution formula and AQ qualifying criteria is heavily weighted toward rewarding the AQ Conferences and not rewarding the non AQ Conferences.

The AQ Conferences (65 schools) plus Notre Dame annually receive over 90% of the BCS revenues unless a non AQ Conference school (51 schools) qualifies for a BCS game.

If a non BCS school plays in a BCS game, the non AQ Conferences receive 18% of the revenue and the rest – 82% goes to the AQ Conferences and Notre Dame.

Annually, non AQ Conferences are only guaranteed 9% of the total revenue to split among 51 institutions.

BCS Revenue distribution:

AQ Conferences and Notre Dame (66 schools) = 91%

Non AQ Conferences (51 schools) = 9%

If non AQ Conference schools play in a BCS game another 9% is added to the non AQ conferences distribution.

## **GOVERNANCE**

The BCS does not afford Conferences equitable representation on the BCS Presidential Oversight Committee which is the body that governs the BCS.

- The Automatic Qualifying Conferences (65 schools) receive 6 votes.
- Notre Dame receives one vote.
- The non automatic qualifying conferences (51 schools) receive 1 vote total!

65 schools have 6 votes

51 schools have 1 vote

Notre Dame has 1 vote

This voting distribution is unfair, inequitable and totally unmanageable. One president cannot adequately represent 51 institutions in five different conferences.

The NCAA sponsors 88 Championships in almost every sport, but they do not sponsor the biggest one – the Championship of the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) formerly Division 1A. The 6 AQ Conference commissioners and the athletic director at Notre Dame control the BCS and the national championship for major college football. (FBS)

This group has devised a system that gives them approximately 90% of the proceeds and essentially excludes over 50 institutions from playing for the National Championship.

The BCS system needs to be more equitable financially, more accessible and provide institutions with fair representation.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these concerns with you today.