

[Home](#)[In the News](#)[Committee Actions](#)[The Committee](#)[GOP Reso](#)

House Energy and Commerce Committee Republicans

FEATURED STORY

A recent report by the Government Accountability Office, requested by committee Republicans, found that the Food and Drug Administration was slow to ban cheats and fakers from conducting research for the agency. For the report, click [here](#).

PRESS RELEASE

Barton: BCS Is an Economic Cartel

December 9, 2009

WASHINGTON –Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Joe Barton, R-Texas, today made the following statement during the Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee markup of H.R. 390 College Football Playoff Act of 2009:

“What can we say? It’s December and the BCS is in chaos again. We have two excellent undefeated teams that are going to play for the so-called national championship, the University of Texas and the University of Alabama. I think they’re worthy teams – my wife went to the University of Texas so obviously she’s excited. I know many of my friends, and you do, too, in the Alabama delegation are excited. Having said that, once again this year we have three undefeated teams – TCU, Boise State and the University of Cincinnati – that have played the same number of games, played the same of opponents and their players and fans have no chance to say that they might play in the ultimate game of football and be the national champions.

“We also have a number of very worthy teams – the University of Florida, that was No. 1 all year long until it was defeated by the University of Alabama in the SEC Championship game. I think they could legitimately say that they might win the playoff. I mean, who wants to play Florida this week? With great respect to my friend from Nebraska, who would have thought they might come within a second of defeating the University of Texas? Nebraska’s defense is unbelievable. The only thing that their defensive lineman didn’t sack at Cowboys Stadium last weekend was Jerry Jones and he would have sacked him but he probably didn’t know how to get up to his box to do it.

“There’s a need for a college football system. I think it’s telling that they’ve changed the name of the subdivision for the schools of Division 1-A from Division 1-A football to the Football Bowl Subdivision and yet the other schools that play football they call them the Football Championship Subdivision because they play through to a playoff. In all of sports, at least in the United States, at every level, whether it’s professional or amateur, there is some sort of a merit-based, competition-based, winner-take-all playoff or meet except in the Football Bowl Subdivision. Can they be right and every other sport be wrong, Mr. Chairman? I don’t think so.

“What our fans and friends really need to know about the Football Bowl Subdivision system is it’s not about choosing the championship through competition on the gridiron – it’s about revenue-sharing for the schools in the BCS conferences. I had my staff do some research, Mr. Chairman. It turns out that TCU, which has gone to bowl games 10 of the 11 years that the BCS has been in existence, and has gone to and won four straight games in the last four years, has received less bowl money than Baylor University in Waco, where my mother and brother went to school, and where I grew up. I’m not anti-Baylor Bear but Baylor, which hasn’t been in a bowl game in the 11 years of the BCS and has been beaten by TCU two years in the last four years, has received more bowl money than TCU. Now why is that, Mr. Chairman? It’s because Baylor is part of the Big 12 which is one of the BCS conferences and the Big 12 has got a guarantee of one or two bowl slots depending on where their teams are ranked at the end of the season. They also have tie-ins so for example, eight of the 12 Big 12 teams are in bowl games. Now I’m fine with that, Mr. Chairman, because one of those schools is my school, Texas A&M.

“I’m not anti-bowl and I’m not anti-Big 12 but it is telling that TCU which has beaten everybody on the field has received less money in the bowl games they’ve played in than Baylor, which hasn’t even been in a bowl game in the last 11 years. I would also point out that as the Football Bowl Subdivision is currently constituted, there are 120 schools that play. In the 11 years of the existence of the BCS, how many of those schools have played in the so-called championship game, Mr. Chairman? Eleven. You can almost name them just like this: the University of Florida, LSU, University of Texas, Miami, Florida State, USC,

Search:

[Thomas Bill Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#)

 **Breaking News**

 **RSS Feed Subscribe**

 **Email Sign Up**

U.S. Representative Joe Barton



Joe Barton was first elected to congress the people of Texas Sixth Congressional District in 1984. In 2 he was selected by House colleagues to the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce...

[Read More >](#)

Ohio State. That's six or seven just off the top of my head.

"We have a system that is designed as an economic cartel, Mr. Chairman. It does an outstanding job of that. Eighty to 90 percent of the revenue generated by the bowls in college football goes to the BCS schools. If the fans think the BCS is about picking the best team, or teams, to play in the championship, they're wrong. That's just an aside. Again, when the BCS was created, there were the four big BCS bowls – the Orange Bowl, the Sugar Bowl, the Rose Bowl and the Fiesta Bowl. They rotated the championship each year. Then three years ago, or four years ago, they decided to play those four bowl games each year and then the next week we'll do the so-called BCS championship game and we'll rotate that among the four. So now you've gone from four to five and still don't have a playoff. The money's gone up but the money is equally shared. The teams that play in the BCS bowl that's not the championship game get just as much money as the teams that play in the BCS championship game.

"It is truly a cartel and in the United States, if this cartel existed in the business world, it would be in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act and we wouldn't be having a markup on a little, benign bill like this, we'd be having an antitrust markup. I might also point out that all the revenue generated is tax-exempt under the nonprofit rule of the IRS for the colleges. We have a multi-billion-dollar operation that is not taxed, not subject to the antitrust laws and doesn't really come close to having, as you pointed out in your opening statement, a fair and equitable system to determine the national championship.

"I'm very proud to be marking this bill up. I'm very proud to have you as a co-sponsor and I look forward to moving the bill to full committee."

A copy of the bill can be found [here](#).

[Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Joe Barton's Web Site](#)
2322A Rayburn House Office Building | Washington, DC 20515 | (202) 225-3641

