



To the Kansas Senate Education Committee:

"Sport has the power to change the world...it has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair." First articulated by Nelson Mandela, this statement speaks volumes for the contribution of adaptive sports in a collegiate setting; the opportunity for young people with disabilities to achieve more than they ever thought possible, both within and outside of athletic competition.

The University of Alabama's Adapted Athletics Department understands the influence that providing competitive athletic opportunities, for people with a physical disability, has on the community around them. We know that allowing students an equal opportunity for access to athletics is of utmost importance. Each person deserves the opportunity to use sport as an avenue to learn skills such as leadership and teamwork. A classification of "disabled" should not disqualify them from the chance to live a rewarding and healthy life.

Without an adapted athletics program, the sport opportunities for student-athletes with a disability are all but obsolete. Furthermore, the gap between these individuals and their "able-bodied" peers is widened to a nearly insurmountable gap.

Our work proudly fulfills The University of Alabama's mission "To advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the State, the Nation, and the World through the creation, translation, and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research, and service." Our adapted athletic programs offer a magnet opportunity for many student-athletes who bring unique perspectives, regularly from all over the world, further diversifying our campus. It is a point of pride that we have the potential to impact the future of many communities, both domestic and worldwide.

The University of Alabama integrates adaptive athletics into many levels of our school. We offer classes to learn about people with disabilities, and specifically within the realm of sport. We also benefit research projects specifically aimed at people living with a physical disability. Additionally, many students engage in unique peer-to-peer interaction while volunteering or completing an internship within our department.

On behalf of The University of Alabama's Adapted Sports Department's intercollegiate men's and women's wheelchair basketball teams, as well as our intercollegiate tennis team, and many emerging sports, we urge you to support SB 470. There are countless individuals that will be directly influenced, and exponentially more that will be touched by the implementation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adam O. Kramer", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adam O. Kramer | Assistant Coach, Women's Wheelchair Basketball

