

**News**

## **HARTLEY IN 'LITTLE VILLAGE' ON TITLE IX AND COVID CUTS**

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Partner Sarah Hartley was quoted March 3 by *Little Village* concerning the risks universities and colleges face as they move to cut athletic programs in response to financial challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions that receive federal funding and requires schools to provide equal opportunities for male and female athletes. Universities not in compliance with Title IX risk losing federal funding. Those considering cutting a women's team should first conduct a complete gender equity review, otherwise they might "face significant litigation risk" if they fail to take Title IX compliance into account, noted Hartley, co-leader of BCLP's Higher Education Team. "I think what's important to understand is that despite being almost 50 years past the time that Title IX was passed, I think it's fair to say that a lot of institutions don't have gender parity yet. A lot of courts, when they look at compliance, look at that historical data and the trend of improvement. But I think if you have a student-athlete who's actually willing to push on the Title IX issue, you'd find out quite a number of institutions could be doing better."

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