

BOB GOODLATTE, Virginia
CHAIRMAN

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR., Wisconsin
HOWARD COBLE, North Carolina
LAMAR SMITH, Texas
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio
SPENCER BACHUS, Alabama
DARRELL E. ISSA, California
J. RANDY FORBES, Virginia
STEVE KING, Iowa
TRENT FRANKS, Arizona
LOUIE GOHMERT, Texas
JIM JORDAN, Ohio
TED POE, Texas
JASON CHAFFETZ, Utah
TOM MARINO, Pennsylvania
TREY GOWDY, South Carolina
RAÚL R. LABRADOR, Idaho
BLAKE FARENTHOLD, Texas
GEORGE HOLDING, North Carolina
DOUG COLLINS, Georgia
RON DeSANTIS, Florida
JASON SMITH, Missouri
VACANCY

JOHN CONYERS, JR., Michigan
RANKING MEMBER

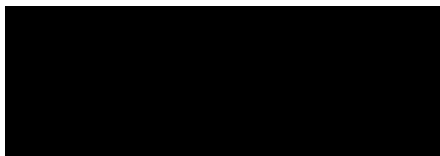
JERROLD NADLER, New York
ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT, Virginia
ZOE LOFGREN, California
SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Texas
STEVE COHEN, Tennessee
HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR., Georgia
PEDRO R. PIERLUISI, Puerto Rico
JUDY CHU, California
TED DEUTCH, Florida
LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ, Illinois
KAREN BASS, California
CEDRIC L. RICHMOND, Louisiana
SUZAN K. DELBENE, Washington
JOE GARCIA, Florida
HAKEEM S. JEFFRIES, New York
DAVID CICILLINE, Rhode Island

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY



September 10, 2014

Mr. Roger Goodell
Commissioner
National Football League



Dear Commissioner Goodell:

We write concerning the important issue of domestic violence, which unfortunately impacts every level of our society, and which we must find ways to combat comprehensively. Our professional sports leagues are important economic and cultural institutions in the United States and we are interested in the manner in which these leagues handle incidents of domestic violence by their players, owners, and other employees. We believe that these high-profile professional leagues are, in many ways, in a position of public trust and should be at the forefront of handling such incidents appropriately.

With this year marking the 20th anniversary of the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act, we all recognize that this issue requires strengthened and sustained efforts by individuals, organizations, and government. Of course, we are particularly concerned about information that has come to light about the perpetration of domestic violence by one of the NFL's players, Ray Rice, against his then-fiancé, Janay Palmer, in an elevator at the Revel Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey on February 15, 2014.

Given the important role the NFL and the other major professional sports leagues can play in shaping public perceptions concerning domestic violence, it would appear to be in the public interest to have the highest level of transparency associated with reviews of potential misconduct.

Thus for example, while we understand that you have stated in an interview yesterday on behalf of the NFL that, "We assumed that there was a video, we asked for the video, we asked for anything that was pertinent, but we were never granted that opportunity," to our knowledge the public has not been informed as to specifically how and in what context the request was made, and specifically how relevant law enforcement responded. Nor has there been a full explanation as to whether the video was requested of others, such as Mr. Rice's attorney or the casino where the incident occurred (and if not, why not), or whether any employees, agents, or

consultants of the league or any of its teams outside of your office had access to the video prior to September 8. We therefore urge greater transparency and explanations on these matters.

We welcome your recent willingness to change the NFL's policies regarding issues of domestic violence, and we also believe other major professional sports leagues should consider making their policies public and reviews transparent as well. We look forward to working with you and all of the major professional sports leagues so that we can all participate in the effort to reduce incidents of domestic violence, increase transparency in their review, and better respond to those cases that unfortunately do occur.

Sincerely,

John Conyers

Judy Chu

Joe Loya

Chris V. Coons

Hank Johnson

Arnold Nadler

Sheila Jackson Lee

Angus D. King

Steve Lohren

V. Blase

Karen Bass

Mark Green

Letter to Commissioner Goodell
September 10, 2014
Page 3

cc: The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary

Mr. Gary Bettman
Commissioner, National Hockey League

Mr. Don Garber
Commissioner, Major League Soccer

Mr. Bud Selig
Commissioner, Major League Baseball

Mr. Adam Silver
Commissioner, National Basketball Association

A large, stylized, light gray watermark logo reading "TMZ" is centered on the page. The letters are thick and blocky, with rounded terminals. The "T" has a horizontal top bar. The "M" has a central dip. The "Z" has a horizontal bottom bar.