



Gary B. Bettman | Commissioner

September 17, 2014

Members of the Committee on the Judiciary  
Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6216

Dear Members:

I write in response to your letter dated September 10, addressed to Roger Goodell, Commissioner of the National Football League, on which I was copied. I appreciate the opportunity to express the National Hockey League's (the "League" or "NHL") views on the important issue of addressing domestic violence, and to provide you with information regarding our applicable practices and policies.

We concur with the sentiments expressed in your letter and wholeheartedly agree that the issue of domestic violence is one of serious and significant importance. The NHL has long believed that domestic violence must not be tolerated and efforts to prevent it must be taken. For at least the last decade, the League has provided annual training and education for our Players on situations that may lead to or result in incidents of violence in the home. This training and education has been delivered in a number of forums and contexts, by multiple voices. Specifically, and on an annual basis, both NHL Security Department personnel and our medical professionals who administer the NHL/NHL Players' Association ("NHLPA") Substance Abuse and Behavioral Health Program each meet with the Players on each NHL team to train and educate them, and to discuss issues relating to domestic violence (among other issues). In addition, the NHL and NHLPA organize an annual Rookie Orientation Program at which two different training programs deal comprehensively with the importance of avoiding personal conduct issues -- including, specifically, domestic violence.

Although the emphasis and content of the League's annual trainings are reviewed and modified on a regular basis to remain engaging and relevant, in general, the training programs focus on: (i) identifying the triggers that lead to conflict and domestic violence; (ii) outlining ways to avoid a potentially dangerous situation prior to its escalation into a real conflict; (iii) offering healthier and alternative mechanisms for handling personal conflicts; (iv) providing information about third-party assistance for Players in need of counseling or other behavioral intervention; and (v) explaining the criminal, civil, professional, personal and other consequences associated with engaging in domestic violence. It is our hope and sincere belief that the NHL's education and training programs have helped our Players make better decisions in their lives; certainly that would include their conduct with respect to their relationships with family members and other loved ones.

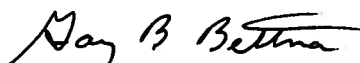
**National Hockey League**

We believe that by reinforcing these messages continually, the Players are better prepared to appreciate the seriousness of the issue from a personal and professional standpoint and, hopefully, to avoid putting themselves in situations that will bring harm to their families and themselves. Our Players are reminded continually that they live and act as role models to many people and that their behavior and conduct always will be subject to extreme scrutiny -- at the League level and in the court of public opinion. Our Players take seriously the importance of their roles in this regard, and in representing each of their respective team organizations, the League and sport of hockey generally.

Fortunately, our League has not had to deal with any serious incident involving a substantiated case of domestic violence in recent years, and we hope that our Players continue to avoid these situations. Having said that, if a Player engages in domestic violence (or any other inappropriate off-ice misconduct), the League maintains the ability to impose discipline for such misconduct. The League's powers in this regard are set forth clearly in the NHL's Collective Bargaining Agreement, Constitution and By-Laws. We remain committed to the principle of addressing domestic violence and protecting the integrity and reputation of our Players and our sport generally, and we would not hesitate to take appropriate disciplinary action in the event it were to become necessary and/or appropriate to do so. In that regard, please be assured that we certainly will continue to prioritize the subject of domestic violence in the training and education of the Players who play in our League, and will hold our Players to a high standard of personal conduct.

We appreciate your raising your concerns regarding the important issue of domestic violence and we welcome the opportunity to respond to any further questions you might have.

Respectfully,



Gary B. Bettman  
Commissioner