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October 12, 2007

Mr. Roger Goodell, Commissioner
National Football League
280 Park Avenue
New York, NY10017

Dear Commissioner Goodell:

We are writing to formally request that the National Football League (NFL) provide the answers and documents in response to the attached list of questions. As you may be aware, the House Judiciary Committee has requested a nonpartisan Congressional Research Service (CRS) report that will examine the types of health problems suffered by current and former NFL players. The CRS report, requested on a bipartisan basis, will provide Congress and the public an objective analysis of the types and severity of injuries suffered by NFL players, the benefits programs available to injured players, and the barriers to former players seeking benefits. In addition, the report will delve into related issues such as the problem of concussions and its long-term effects on players.

The Committee's request for a CRS report arose out of testimony from the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law oversight hearing on June 26, 2007 entitled, "The National Football League's System for Compensating Retired Players: An Uneven Playing Field?" During that hearing, former players Mike Ditka, Harry Carson, Curt Marsh, and Brent Boyd detailed injuries sustained during their playing days that continue to hamper them today. They also recounted the complex process that former players must decipher in order to obtain disability benefits. Furthermore, the hearing exposed serious questions about why only a small percentage of former players receive disability benefits in such a dangerous sport.

As a result of the hearing, several members of the Committee have suggested that Congress should intervene to fix what has been described as a broken system of delivering disability benefits to former NFL players. The CRS study will provide the essential facts to help us consider what steps, if any, Congress could take on this issue in the future.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and ask that you provide these answers and documents to us by October 26, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. Please direct your responses and questions to the staff at the House Judiciary Committee office, 2138 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 (tel: 202-225-3951; fax: 202-225-7680). Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman

Lamar S. Smith
Ranking Member

Linda T. Sanchez
Chair, Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law

Christopher B. Cannon
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law

Enclosure

Questions for the National Football League

1. How many players received pensions under the Pete Rozelle NFL Player Retirement Plan from 1989 through the merger of the plan with the Bert Bell Plan in 1993? What was the average amount of pension that was paid to players in each year?

2. What are the types of injuries and health problems (e.g., obesity) that players suffer while playing football? What are the implications of these injuries and problems while these individuals are still playing? How might these injuries affect players after they retire?

3. Please provide copies of all of the studies and surveys that the league has conducted, been involved in, or has hired someone else to conduct, involving players' injuries, disabilities, and health problems (e.g, obesity). In addition, please provide a list of ongoing and planned studies, if any, including, for each study, the names of the authors, their organizational affiliations, the purpose of the study, and the expected date of completion. For example, please provide information about the study mentioned in the league's August 14, 2007, press release titled "NFL Outlines for Players Steps Taken to Address Concussions," and the agreement to fund research on dementia, which was mentioned in the NFL Players Association July 25, 2007, media release. The press release states: "Research is currently underway to determine if there are any long-term effects of concussion in NFL athletes." How has the league used the data and studies?

4. When was the Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MBTI) Committee established? What is the composition of the committee, and who selects the members? What is the purpose or role of the committee? Please provide copies of the committee's studies, reports, articles, and any other publications produced, or commissioned, by the committee. Other than publications and studies, what has the committee accomplished since its inception?

5. When was the Cardiovascular Health Committee established? What is the composition of the committee, and who selects the members? What is the purpose or role of the committee? Please provide copies of the committee's studies, reports, articles, and any other publications produced, or commissioned, by the committee. Other than publications and studies, what has the committee accomplished since its inception?

6. Other than the MBTI and Cardiovascular Health Committees, does the NFL have any committees or entities that examine health issues involving active players, former players, or both?

7. How many players have retired because of an injury or injuries? What types of injuries did these players sustain? Indicate the number of players who sustained each type of injury.

8. Describe the process used for funding the Retirement Plan and other benefits and programs. Who contributes funds, and how are the funds allocated among the Retirement Plan, other benefits and programs, and all other expenses (for example, players' salaries)?

9. Provide a list of contributions the NFL has made to organizations and funds that provide

assistance to players and former players. Include the amount of money contributed, the name of the recipient, and the year the donation was made.

10. If the NFL conducts an education program for players on injuries and the short-term, as well as long-term, benefits and risks of common treatments for injuries and pain associated with injuries, provide information about this program, including copies of the materials, if any, that are provided to players.

11. Please provide information about the NFL Alumni Association's Dire Need Fund, the Hall of Fame Enshrinee Assistance Fund, and any other funds or organizations of which you are aware that provide financial or medical assistance to former players. Indicate which funds or organizations, if any, are affiliated with the league.