



## NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

September 22, 2010

**ROGER GOODELL**  
*Commissioner*

The Honorable George Miller  
Chairman  
Committee on Education and Labor  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller,

On behalf of the National Football League and its 32 member clubs, I write to express our strong support for the “Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act”. The NFL is grateful for the opportunity to work closely with you in developing this important legislation, which will further our shared goals of increasing concussion awareness and preventing these injuries among our youngest athletes, not only in football but in all sports. The NFL looks forward to continue working with this Committee and all other advocates for the benefit of youth athletes.

The NFL understands its obligation to educate and inform parents, teachers, coaches, and especially youth athletes about the risks of concussions. As more has become known about head injuries, the NFL has become the leader on concussions not just for the safety of its own players, but for all athletes at all levels of football as well as all other sports. I am proud of what the NFL has done in the professional game, but I am particularly pleased to share with you the NFL's initiatives to educate and inform athletes, parents, coaches and others who work with athletes, about concussions.

The NFL has endorsed the adoption of the Zackery Lystedt law in every state. Zack's law is named after a 13-year old football player who suffered a serious brain injury after returning to play too soon following a concussion. Eight states have adopted a form of the Lystedt law to date, and it has three core principles: 1. Students athletes and a parent or guardian must sign a consent form every year acknowledging that they are informed about concussions; 2. Any youth athlete who appears to have suffered a concussion in any sport is not permitted to return to play or practice on the same day; and, 3. That athlete must be cleared in the subsequent days or weeks by a licensed healthcare provider trained in the management of concussions before returning to play or practice.

The “Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act” mandates the adoption of these core principles in every state as well. When Congress passes the “Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act,” or when their state passes a version of the Zackery Lystedt law, every parent can be confident that their children who participate in sports – whether football, soccer, hockey, lacrosse, gymnastics, or other activities – will be safer and better informed.

As part of our support for adoption of the Lystedt law by other states, the NFL is convening an education and advocacy conference in October with the doctors, politicians and advocates responsible for the adoption of Zack's Law in Washington State. We will make the conference available to on-line to anyone interested in learning about youth concussion laws and how to make a difference in their own community.

We are also pleased to highlight an additional educational element of the "Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act". As you may know, before the start of this season, a new concussion awareness poster was placed in every locker room across the League, and was accompanied by a player "fact sheet". The poster and fact sheet were jointly developed by a group of respected medical experts who worked closely with the CDC. The NFL and CDC have taken the next step, and have jointly developed a concussion education poster targeting youth sports that will be available at no cost on the CDC's website in the coming weeks. Your bill mandating materials like these be posted in every school will help achieve our shared goal of promoting concussion education. This is just one element of the NFL's efforts to assist in the development and broad dissemination of reliable medical information on concussions, which will give players, parents, coaches and others the information they need.

Mr. Chairman, we commend your efforts in introducing the "Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act". The NFL shares your goals and stands ready to assist in your efforts to pass it into law. Together, we look forward to protecting youth athletes across the country from concussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Goodell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

ROGER GOODELL

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*Commissioner*