



NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

ROGER GOODELL
Commissioner

October 19, 2011

The Honorable Darrell Issa
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2347 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2235 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Issa and Ranking Member Cummings,

I write to express my thanks for your time last Friday and for your strong support of the National Football League's efforts to begin testing our players for human growth hormone. The NFL respects the historical role that your committee has played in supporting effective drug testing programs in professional sports. As I said last Friday – and as the NFL has made clear for decades – we share your belief that these programs are essential to preserve the integrity of competition on the field, protect the health and safety of athletes, and perhaps most important, set the right example for athletes at all levels, especially youth athletes. Professional football must be free of performance-enhancing drugs and our testing regimen must be implemented fairly and be based on the best available science.

As we discussed last week, the NFL agrees with the dozens of scientists, toxicologists and other experts around the world who have concluded that human growth hormone testing is reliable, safe and accurate. In fact, there are no experts in this field who state otherwise and nothing was presented to you last week that would call into question the validity or reliability of the tests used in the Olympics and many other sports (including minor league baseball). This is true both as a general matter and as the test would apply to professional football players. As we noted, the NFLPA specifically proposed random testing for HGH and mandatory suspensions for

players who test positive. Its concerns about the scientific underpinnings of the tests were literally raised at the last minute and, we believe, are without foundation.

Nonetheless, we recognize the practical reality that some players have expressed concerns, and that any program of drug testing will be much more effective if it has the support of the players. Accordingly, we will work within the framework you articulated at our meeting to address the players' misgivings. The game plan you outlined is constructive and provides the opportunity for the NFL to become the first professional sports league to test for growth hormone.

It is our understanding that the NFL, and all parties present at the meeting, committed to the following six points:

1. The NFL will begin collecting blood for the purposes of human growth hormone testing "immediately". We have advised the NFLPA that we are prepared to begin collecting blood specimens as soon as this coming Monday, October 24. We also have again provided to the Union detailed information regarding the protocols for selection of players for testing, sample collection, transportation, and storage, as well as educational material for players so that they will better understand the testing process. The NFLPA has raised no objection to any of these protocols, but on October 18 advised as follows:

"As you certainly are aware, we have not agreed to any procedures relating to testing for human growth hormone, including the start of any specimen collection procedures with our players. In the absence of an agreement, we will advise our players that they should refuse to submit to any collection procedures."
2. Specimens will not be analyzed and players will not be subject to disciplinary proceedings until the remaining issues surrounding the testing are resolved. Until that time, collected blood samples will be stored.
3. The NFL will work with the players to develop appeal procedures, including the scope of review on appeal of scientific issues.
4. USADA will be available to meet with players and NFLPA officials to review information on testing and the underlying science. This meeting is to occur within two weeks. [We believe that USADA has extended an invitation to the NFLPA to schedule this meeting.]
5. A mutually-acceptable third party will meet with WADA/USADA and review the science underlying the tests for HGH. [We expect to receive suggestions from WADA and USADA shortly and will respond as quickly as possible to those suggestions.]

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6. The Committee will convene another meeting within 30 days to evaluate the progress the parties have made unless collection has not begun. In that case, the parties should expect a second meeting with the committee in two weeks to explain the delay.

Once again, the NFL appreciates your leadership on this issue of health and safety. You have our commitment to cooperate with the Committee and the NFLPA and our pledge to do everything in our power to make substantial progress leading toward a complete agreement within the next 30 days.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Goodell", written in a cursive style.

ROGER GOODELL

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