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September 13, 2011

Mr. Roger Goodell
Commissioner
National Football League
280 Park Avenue
17th Floor
New York, New York 10017

Mr. DeMaurice Smith
Executive Director
NFL Players Association
1133 20th Street
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Commissioner Goodell and Executive Director Smith,

Congratulations on reaching a successful collective bargaining agreement in time for a full 2011 season.

Private sector negotiations like the one you recently completed should not involve Congress. Yet, as you know, many young Americans hold sports figures as models for their own future. Professional sports impact the country in one way that is not replicated in other business contexts. The standards that the NFL and other sports leagues set for our youth athletes with regard to performance enhancing drugs implicates the public interest.

It is with that in mind that I write to congratulate you on becoming the first professional sports league to agree to random testing for human growth hormone. This sets exactly the right example for young athletes, makes the game safer for those who play it, and serves the fans who demand a level playing field.

Unfortunately, the testing regimen that parties agreed to did not start in time for the kickoff of the regular season. This is extremely unfortunate given that the test is widely supported by experts in the field and, just only a few weeks ago, caught a minor league baseball player who immediately admitted his guilt.

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Mr. Roger Goodell
Mr. DeMaurice Smith

I hope all involved parties will adopt the agreement you reached and that it will be implemented immediately. Following through on your commitment will be part of the legacy you leave this great game.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



John McCain
United States Senator