

June 3, 2011

Major League Baseball
Office of the Commissioner of Baseball
Allan H. (Bud) Selig
Commissioner
245 Park Avenue, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10167

Dear Commissioner Selig:

As religious leaders in the Los Angeles community and lifelong fans of the game of baseball, we are writing to express our sincere displeasure with the manner in which the Los Angeles Dodgers and Frank McCourt have been treated by Major League Baseball. In particular, we are deeply troubled by the rancor, media attacks, and lack of equity that has been afforded the Los Angeles Dodgers and Frank McCourt as they seek to provide financial stability to one of baseball's most notable franchises. The attacks on Frank McCourt's ownership of the Los Angeles Dodgers, and your action to wrest control of the franchise from its ownership by appointing a monitor, has spurred this appeal to you. We strongly support Frank McCourt and the Los Angeles Dodgers and urge you to do the same.

The Los Angeles Dodgers have a storied legacy in Major League Baseball history and particularly in the struggle of African Americans during an era of segregation and inequitable treatment. In 1947, the Southland's own Jackie Robinson became the first African American to play for a major league baseball team, then the Brooklyn Dodgers. His talent and courage led to the success of the Dodgers and opened the doors for future Dodgers including Don Newcombe, Roy Campanella, Louis "Sweet Lou" Johnson, and Maury Wills. Along the way these Dodger legends inspired generations of current and aspiring baseball players; particularly the youth in the communities in which we minister day after day.

In our communities and churches we attempt to teach our thousands of congregants about fairness, dignity and equity. That is why we must speak up in support of Frank McCourt and the Los Angeles Dodgers. At a minimum, the estimated \$3 billion television deal with FOX should improve the financial viability of the franchise. This deal would provide much needed revenue to the franchise and allow the Dodgers organization to regularly make payroll in a timely manner. In short, Frank McCourt has added significant value to the Los Angeles community

through his ownership of the Los Angeles Dodgers and it would be a terrible mistake to allow those gains to falter.

We are all affected by the trying economic times in which we live. As the songwriter states, "We fall down, but we get up again." Frank McCourt is a man of conviction. He is a man of courage and integrity with a sense of purpose. We are confident that though he may have fallen down somewhat, he has the courage of his convictions to rise back up again and continue the strong legacy of the Los Angeles Dodgers. All we ask is that he be afforded the same opportunity as other owners and teams who have fallen on economic hard times. It is your moral obligation as the MLB Commissioner and as a man who wields significant power and influence on the game of baseball to recognize this.

It is our sincere hope that you will exercise your judgment wisely and explore all options and remedies prior to making a determination on the future of the Los Angeles Dodgers, including the state of their ownership and any revenue-generating plans.

We would appreciate your prompt response and trust that you will make the appropriate decision.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. John J. Hunter
Senior Minister
First A.M.E. Church of Los Angeles

Bishop T. Larry Kirkland
Presiding Prelate of the Fifth Episcopal District
African Methodist Episcopal Church

Elder Charles Blake
West Angeles Church of God in Christ

Minister Calvin H. Bowers
Figueroa Church of Christ

Pastor Marvis Davis
President, Baptist Ministers Conference of Los Angeles and Southern California
New Bethel Baptist Church

Pastor John E. Cager, III
President of the Southern California Ministerial Alliance, AME Church
Second AME Church Los Angeles

Bishop Gregory L. Dixon
First Church of God

Pastor William Epps
Second Baptist Church

Dr. J. Benjamin Hardwick
President of the Western Baptist Convention

Dr. Norman Johnson
1st New Christian Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church

Pastor L.A. Kessee
Bethany Baptist Church of West Los Angeles

Dr. Henry Masters
Holman United Methodist Church

Pastor Bobby Newman
Citizens of Zion Baptist Church

Pastor Clyde Oden
Bryant Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church

Pastor Lucious Pope
Greater New Vision Missionary Baptist Church

Pastor Xavier L. Thompson,
Southern Missionary Baptist Church

Bishop Kenneth C. Ulmer,
Faithful Central Bible Church

Pastor Melvin Wade
Mt. Moriah Baptist Church

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Pastor Sylvester Washington
Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

Pastor C. Dennis Williams
Brookins African Methodist Episcopal Church