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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

TODD ROKITA
4TH DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
VICE-CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ROKITA.HOUSE.GOV

January 25, 2018

Mr. Jim Irsay
Indianapolis Colts
7001 West 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46254

Dear Mr. Irsay,

I appreciate your recognition of the NFL as an embodiment of our national values and civic culture. As part of that recognition, I encourage you to urge Commissioner Roger Goodell to allow the airing of American Veterans' (AMVETS) Super Bowl advertisement honoring the flag and the sacrifices of our troops.

AMVETS' ad is a modest request for players to stand during the national anthem. In its rejection of the ad, the NFL said that the Super Bowl is not a venue for "political" expressions, but the league has consistently defended the rights of its players to free expression when kneeling in protest during the anthem. In fact, in related comments on the free speech controversy, Commissioner Goodell said, "A public discourse makes us strong." I agree. The Super Bowl, watched by millions around the world, exhibits American principles and national character, and free speech is one of our most important ideals. The NFL should demonstrate our commitment to this fundamental liberty.

You have spoken eloquently of the NFL's exemplification of "the spirit in which this nation was founded," and your civic engagement is a testament to Hoosier values. In your capacity as an influential owner, you have the opportunity to stand up for free expression, our cultural inheritance, and American exceptionalism. I ask that you support airing this ad to defend free speech.

As always, thank you for your work throughout Indiana. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Rokita".

Todd Rokita
Member of Congress

Enclosures
TER/ad