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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 403      Session of  
2005

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INTRODUCED BY COSTA, BIANCUCCI, DeLUCA, DERMODY, YUDICHAK, MANN,  
PISTELLA, CREIGHTON, DIVEN, S. H. SMITH AND MARKOSEK,  
JULY 2, 2005

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
JULY 2, 2005

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A RESOLUTION

1    Condemning the National Football League's recent actions  
2        restricting the availability of televised games.

3        WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is home to two  
4    professional National Football League (NFL) teams; and

5        WHEREAS, The substantial fan base within the Commonwealth of  
6    Pennsylvania for each of these teams is due to each team's  
7    legacy of excellence on and off the field; and

8        WHEREAS, Revenues from these professional football teams  
9    exceed more than \$1.2 billion; and

10       WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and its citizens  
11    have invested substantial amounts of money in the construction  
12    of stadiums for these professional football teams and have  
13    supported their efforts during the preseason, regular season and  
14    playoff season through ticket purchases, concession sales and  
15    other direct economic impacts; and

16       WHEREAS, The National Football League has recently used its  
17    monopoly status to institute national television arrangements

1 which has the practical effect of removing this substantial fan  
2 base from everyday enjoyment of professional football; and

3 WHEREAS, This recent action to move "Monday Night Football"  
4 from a free national television network (ABC) to cable  
5 television (ESPN) will directly result in a large number of  
6 Pennsylvanians being unable to watch "Monday Night Football" in  
7 2006; and

8 WHEREAS, "Monday Night Football" on ABC has been an  
9 institution and a pillar in the sports fan community since 1970;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, While the move of "Monday Night Football" from ABC  
12 to ESPN may have some positive impact on the bottom line of The  
13 Walt Disney Company due to its ownership rights in both, it  
14 should not come at the expense of the citizens of the  
15 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

16 WHEREAS, While the additional six-year deal the NFL entered  
17 into with another national television network, NBC, whereby  
18 Sunday night football games will be televised starting in 2006,  
19 is a step in the right direction, such action would not  
20 contemplate the marquee contests scheduled by the NFL for  
21 "Monday Night Football"; and

22 WHEREAS, Removal of "Monday Night Football," coupled with  
23 archaic local market television rules, is systematically  
24 distancing the football fan who cannot afford to buy cable or  
25 attend a game in person from the game of professional football;  
26 and

27 WHEREAS, The NFL was created with the general public in mind,  
28 and bringing professional football to the masses via national  
29 television networks is the most viable means to satisfy this  
30 end; and

1       WHEREAS, Expensive cable channels, season television packages  
2 or wholly owned cable networks such as the NFL Network do not  
3 deliver professional football to the masses; and

4       WHEREAS, It is often said that it is the fans for whom all  
5 professional sports are played; and

6       WHEREAS, Currently there are still 10% of households in the  
7 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania without basic cable television; and

8       WHEREAS, Federal law allows the NFL to make television  
9 programming changes without further review by any court or  
10 regulatory body; therefore be it

11       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
12 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania condemn this most recent practice  
13 in particular and the trends in the telecasting of football  
14 games generally; and be it further

15       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the NFL to  
16 reconsider the effect of its actions to narrow the access of  
17 high-profile football games for the average fan; and be it  
18 further

19       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the NFL to  
20 respond to these concerns; and be it further

21       RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
22 the Commissioner of the National Football League, Paul  
23 Tagliabue, 410 Park Avenue, New York NY 10022, and to the  
24 members of the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation.