



March 9, 2018

STATEMENT OF THE KANSAS CITY ROYALS ON SPORTS BETTING LEGISLATION

The Kansas City Royals are proud to play a key role in the growth and vitality of the Kansas City community for the last 50 years — the Royals employ hundreds of people who call Kansas home. But more importantly, we are proud to be an organization that has nurtured a strong bond with our fans, a bond that is at the very heart of what we do every day.

This bond, coupled with our commitment to the State of Kansas, compels our organization to take keen and careful interest in any legislation impacting our team, our fans, and Major League Baseball. With these factors in mind, we respectfully submit our position on the legalization of sports betting for your consideration, as you gather the information necessary to develop the best possible legislation for the state of Kansas.

The Royals and Major League Baseball are not advocating for the state to pass a sports betting legalization law, but if the state does pass such a law, it must -- first and foremost -- guard our sport and our fans from the risks of corruption associated with sports betting. Strong and stringent regulations on betting market operators should be a key requirement to any legislation considered. It is crucial to set a high bar from the outset, as nothing is more important to baseball and to the Kansas City Royals than the trust and faith of our fans.

After careful review, it is our belief House Bill 2752, sponsored by Representative Jan Kessinger, reaches that high bar. This bill contains extremely strong integrity protections and mandated requirements to ensure a strong partnership between the state, Kansas casino operators and our sports league to help stave off potential manipulation. Provisions like those contained in House Bill 2752 are crucial to maintaining the confidence and trust fans have in the integrity of our sporting events.

In addition, as proposed legislation comes before this body, we respectfully submit the following requirements as necessary to legalizing sports betting in Kansas: the ability for sports leagues to opt-out of problematic forms of betting; real-time recordkeeping; the use of official, indisputable league data; combating false or deceptive advertising; age verification of bettors; mandated cooperation with Major League Baseball investigations; barring athletes, coaches and officials from betting on their own games; real-time data sharing; and a requirement that casinos share costs associated with integrity monitoring and offset the significant risk assumed by the sports leagues, who make possible the profits the casinos will realize from betting on our games.

Thank you for holding this hearing and for providing us an opportunity to share our position. Through your thoughtful and deliberate consideration of this complex issue, Kansas will surely lead the way in crafting and passing smart, strong, and safe sports betting legislation for the betterment of this state, its residents, and the future of baseball. We are happy to work with any member of the legislature on the issue. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Uhlich
Senior Vice President, Business
Kansas City Royals

KANSAS CITY ROYALS

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