



June 24, 2014

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

Anthony (Tony) Clark, Executive Director
Major League Baseball Players Association
12 East 49th Street, 24th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Dear Commissioner Selig and Mr. Clark:

Our organizations join the Major League Baseball community in mourning the death of baseball legend and Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn last week. As so many in baseball and in the media have expressed, Tony Gwynn was a true hero. We are deeply saddened that his life was ended far too soon by cancer that he attributed to his longtime use of chewing tobacco.

Major League Baseball and the Players Association can honor Tony Gwynn's memory by agreeing to a complete prohibition on tobacco use at ballparks and on camera. Our organizations urge you to do so without delay.

Use of smokeless tobacco endangers the health of Major League ballplayers. It also sets a terrible example for the millions of young people who watch baseball at the ballpark or on TV and often see players and managers using tobacco.

In 2010, our organizations called on each of you to lead the way in prohibiting the use of smokeless tobacco in baseball. More than 200 supporters, including dozens of public officials, youth baseball leagues, notable baseball figures, faith leaders and state and local health groups, joined us to call for a tobacco prohibition in the 2011 contract. While that contract does include some limitations on where and when smokeless tobacco may be used or carried, these are not sufficient to eliminate smokeless tobacco use in public settings or to prevent more players from becoming addicted to these deadly products.

The tobacco industry spends record sums to promote smokeless products and hook a new generation of youth. Survey results released last week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that it's working. Use of smokeless tobacco by high school students has not declined since 1999; in 2013, 14.7 percent of high school boys, and 8.8 percent of all high school students, reported using smokeless products.

The time for action is NOW. There could be no better way to honor Tony Gwynn than to prohibit tobacco use throughout Major League Baseball. It is time to take tobacco out of baseball once and for all – both for the health of baseball players and to set the right example for America's kids.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society
American Dental Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Medical Association
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
Legacy
Oral Health America
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation