

Dear members of the National Football League Players Association, Women's National Basketball Player's Association, National Basketball Players Association, Major League Baseball Players Association, and National Hockey League Players' Association:

I write to you today in an attempt to appeal not only to your influential platforms as highly-regarded athletes but to your respective purposes as parents and role models for both our children and those in your personal lives. From abortion to voting rights and mask mandates, Texas has become a blueprint by legislators to violate constitutional rights for all, especially for women, children and marginalized communities.

As we watch an incomprehensible assault on basic human rights unfold in Texas, we are simultaneously witnessing a threat to constitutional guarantees for women, children and marginalized communities. Over the past few months, legislators in Texas have passed archaic policies, disguised as laws, that directly violate privacy rights and a woman's freedom to choose, restrict access to free and fair elections for Black and brown voters, and increase the risk of contracting coronavirus. If you are a woman, avoid Texas. If you are Black, avoid Texas. If you want to lower your chances of dying from coronavirus, avoid Texas.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has enacted an extreme voting law that threatens to upend our democracy, and has approved of new political maps that dilute the voices of people of color. By limiting the ability to offer free and fair elections to all, Texas remains a state of hostility for many communities. Recently released data from the 2020 census shows that people of color have [driven](#) 95% of the Texas population growth. Yet, new voting legislation and political maps put these communities at risk of not being able to participate in their democracy. These laws are intended to suppress our constitutional right to vote.

The Texas government has also empowered vigilantes with the authority of the law, going so far as to offer a \$10,000 incentive to sue all who aid women in exercising their constitutional right to an abortion. This leaves nearly everyone involved in the procedure liable to lawsuits; including doctors, nurses, insurance companies, and even rideshare drivers who help take women to receive services.

As a result, physicians can't uphold their Hippocratic Oath to properly and ethically care for women and children. Texas families will not receive the care they deserve because state legislators have issued a modern-day bounty in exchange for the health and safety of women and children. By passing this law, Texas legislators have created a healthcare institution that isn't safe for anyone.

Concurrently, the Texas Attorney General is suing school districts that prioritize the health and safety of their students and teachers by requiring masks. Children are currently unable to receive any coronavirus vaccinations, therefore putting them at further risk of infection to this deadly virus. Texas legislators would rather have children as coronavirus patients than implement laws that protect their most vulnerable demographic.

Texas is setting a precedent for effectively dismantling civil rights throughout the nation. Their top priority is infringing on their constitutional duty to promote the general welfare. It is time we take this situation into our own hands and stand up for what is right. It is up to those with a voice to stand up for the women in our lives, to protect our children and our fellow citizens.

If you are considering signing in Texas, I ask you to ensure that owners are upholding their responsibility of protecting you, the athlete, and your family. I ask you to use your influence to help protect the constitutional rights of each individual at risk.

We have already seen private industries eliminate Texas from their list for potential business, and multi-billion dollar corporations, such as Salesforce, offering to relocate employees, citing a moral responsibility to their employees and society. Now is the time to discuss legislation at all levels, ask owners to protect their athletes, and demand that our democracy is upheld.

Texas lawmakers have destroyed the state's moral compass by passing these laws. In return, **we are asking that you seek employment with sports teams located in states that will protect, honor and serve your families with integrity.**

We are now pleading with you -- if you are a free agent and are considering employment in Texas, look elsewhere. The Texas government will not protect your family. Demand that Texas owners invest in your rights and protect your investments. Texas is not safe for you, your spouse, or your children. Until the legislation is overturned, Texas isn't safe for anyone.

Sincerely,

Derrick Johnson, NAACP President and CEO