

**TACKLING TOXIC WORKPLACES:
EXAMINING THE NFL'S HANDLING
OF WORKPLACE MISCONDUCT AT
THE WASHINGTON COMMANDERS**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

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**TACKLING TOXIC WORKPLACES:
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Wednesday, June 22, 2022

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:10 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Carolyn B. Maloney [chairwoman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Maloney, Norton, Connolly, Krishnamoorthi, Raskin, Khanna, Mfume, Tlaib, Brown, Wasserman Schultz, Welch, Johnson, Speier, Kelly, DeSaulnier, Comer, Jordan, Foxx, Grothman, Gibbs, Higgins, Norman, Sessions, Keller, Fallon, and Donalds.

Also present: Representative Owens.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The Committee will come to order.

Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess of the Committee at any time.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

Good morning and thank all of you for being here.

Our hearing today is about protecting women—and all workers—from sexual harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the workplace.

We will examine one notoriously toxic workplace—the Washington Commanders football team—and the response from the NFL.

During football season, millions of Americans tune in to watch their favorite teams. The NFL and its teams collect tens of billions in revenues thanks in part to Federal benefits. The NFL and its teams have one of the biggest platforms in America. So what happens in the NFL has consequences for the rest of our country.

The Committee launched an investigation last October after the NFL refused to release the findings of an internal investigation into the widespread sexual misconduct at the Washington Commanders. The Committee requested these findings, but the NFL and the Commanders have refused to produce them, while also withholding more than 40,000 documents collected in their internal review.

This lack of transparency suggests that, rather than protecting women, the NFL is hoping to sweep this controversy under the rug, just as powerful men like Dan Snyder have done for decades.

Today we will hear from Roger Goodell, commissioner of the NFL. I am glad he is participating, and I hope we will finally get more transparency about what the NFL found and why Mr. Goodell has worked so hard to keep it secret.

We also invited Daniel Snyder to testify today. But rather than show up and take responsibility for his actions, he chose to skip town. Apparently, Mr. Snyder is in France where he has docked his luxury yacht near a resort town. That should tell you just how much respect he has for women in the workplace.

Mr. Snyder's absence is all the more telling given that the Committee released new evidence today that Mr. Snyder himself, fostered the Commanders' toxic workplace. According to top executives, he fired women—but not men—who engaged in relationships with other employees, while defending male executives accused of sexual harassment. And he kept employees from speaking out through a culture of fear.

As one longtime employee described Mr. Snyder's tactics, quote, "If you don't obey, intimidate. If you still don't obey, terminate." Finally, the employee added, quote, "If that didn't work, buy them off," end quote.

The Committee has also uncovered evidence that Mr. Snyder conducted a shadow investigation to target his accusers, pin the blame on others, and influence the NFL's own internal review. He filed phony lawsuits to collect private phone records, emails, and text messages.

The Committee has a copy of a dossier created by Mr. Snyder using the information he collected. And this dossier is absolutely astonishing and extremely disturbing. It shows the lengths Mr. Snyder went to, to harass, intimidate, and silence his accusers, including journalists, attorneys, and former employees, anyone involved. It starts here just naming journalists that he wants to investigate and investigated. He sent private investigators to former cheerleaders' homes, and he offered hush money to buy their silence.

The NFL was aware of his actions but failed to stop him. We obtained a secret legal agreement between the NFL and the Commanders that enabled Mr. Snyder to prevent the disclosure of documents and information—including to this Committee.

Some have argued that protecting women isn't worthy of this Committee's time. I strongly disagree.

And I'm not alone. In April, six attorneys general condemned the NFL for its ongoing failure to address sexual harassment and gender discrimination across the league. The NFL itself has launched new investigations based on evidence brought to light by the Committee.

For more than two decades, Dan Snyder refused to protect the women who worked for him from the toxic culture he created. The NFL has also failed to protect these women. Now I believe it is up to Congress to protect them and millions more like them. We have introduced two bills, along with Committee members, to do exactly that.

Our first bill, the Accountability for Workplace Misconduct Act, will require employers to conduct thorough investigations and share the outcome with victims, and it will prohibit employers from

using nondisclosure agreements to conceal workplace misconduct, one of Dan Snyder's favorite tactics.

Our second bill is the Professional Images Protection Act. Our investigation confirmed that the Commanders secretly created lewd videos of cheerleaders for the private enjoyment of Dan Snyder. That is despicable, and our bill will create notice and consent requirements for employers who use their employees' professional images.

Let me also assure my colleagues that we can protect workers while also making progress on other important issues. Just this month our Committee held a crucial hearing on gun violence and advanced legislation to protect LGBTQI rights. And next week we will be hearing a bipartisan hearing with President Biden's drug czar on the opioid crisis.

But today our focus is on protecting women in the workplace, and I believe that issue merits our full attention.

In February, the Committee held a roundtable where we heard directly from several courageous former team employees.

Before I yield, I'd like to remind everyone what they said about the harassment they endured and the need for accountability and they asked Congress to act. We will now play a video.

[Video shown.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. I now yield to my good friend, the ranking member, Mr. Comer, for his opening statement.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

A toxic work environment is one in which staff fear meeting or even talking to leadership, where staff is humiliated or, worse, demoted, where employees are retaliated against for raising questions about possible ethical breaches.

Now, where did this take place? Steps away from the Oval Office at the Office of Science and Technology Policy within the Executive Office of the President.

When? It started shortly after President Biden's inauguration in 2021. The very day he was inaugurated, the President said, and I quote, "I'm not joking when I say this. If you ever work with me and I hear you treated another colleague with disrespect, talked down to someone, I will fire you on the spot, no ifs, ands, or buts." Joe Biden said that.

It did not take long for those words to ring hollow. The White House Counsel's Office had well-documented allegations for a year, but it refused to hold bad actors accountable. For all we know, the problems in the Office of Science and Technology Policy may still be happening.

Have we had a single hearing about the hostile work environment at President Biden's top science office? No.

Have Democrats even sent a single oversight letter about it? No.

A core responsibility is of this Committee to conduct oversight of the executive branch. But this entire Congress, Democrats have turned a blind eye to the Biden administration. Instead, the Oversight Committee's investigating a single private organization for workplace misconduct that took place years ago.

Let me be clear. No one should be subjected to a hostile work environment, and bad actors must be held accountable. The workplace misconduct that is the topic of today's hearing has already

been subject to investigations, fines, settlements, and very intense media scrutiny. New leadership has been installed and improved workplace policies implemented without congressional involvement.

During the Democrats' so-called investigation, this Committee has held a roundtable, two transcribed interviews, two depositions, and now this hearing. Democrats, whose top economic concern is that the NFL is not collecting enough money, even urged the Federal Trade Commission to open an investigation based solely on the testimony of a former employee with an axe to grind.

Democrats' playbook is to focus on past and ignore the present and future, all these taxpayer dollars and staff hours to reinvestigate what has already been investigated. No new punishments have been levied against the Commanders due to this investigation because they have already faced consequences for their hostile workplace. No new relief has been granted to any of the aggrieved parties because Congress has no authority to provide relief in any of these instances. No additional workplace improvements have been made due to this investigation because, unlike at the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the workplace overhaul has already begun.

I would ask why Congress must tackle the NFL football team's workplace and not a White House office or our own Members. I think we know the answer. Democrats are more committed to politics than our Committee's mission.

Our Committee's mission is government efficiency and effectiveness. Our Committee's mission is to protect taxpayer dollars from government fraud, waste, and mismanagement. Our Committee's mission is to hold government more accountable.

Instead of conducting oversight of the Federal Government, Democrats investigate the private sector. While our Nation struggles under the weight of growing inflation and rising gas prices, Democrats are demanding oil and gas companies decrease production. They did it right here in this Committee with the oil CEOs down there.

Ro Khanna was the first one to ask each energy CEO: Will you pledge to cut production? And now we know where the President's headed in Saudi Arabia right now. The chairwoman even subpoenaed the oil CEOs after they produced thousands of documents.

While Americans are suffering from the effects of Biden's border crisis, including fentanyl streaming across the border and killing our teens, Democrats have examined paychecks for soccer stars and held numerous hearings to demonize the oil and gas industry and push their radical Green New Deal climate agenda.

While mothers are struggling to find infant formula on store shelves, Democrats held a hearing on pet flea and tick collars.

It's no surprise that a nonpartisan organization gave the Democrats an "F" in oversight. This Committee is failing the American people.

I urge the chairwoman to get back to the core mission of the Oversight Committee and do what the American people elected us to do—conduct oversight of the Federal Government and the Biden administration, which is on a path to destroy America.

Let's hold hearings and conduct oversight on the crises affecting Americans today: 40-year high inflation, skyrocketing gas prices,

out-of-stock baby formula, a raging border crisis, surging fentanyl overdoses, and our tanking stock market.

The American people expect us to be their voice in Washington. It's past time we start doing what we were sent here to do.

And with that, Madam Chair, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Krishnamoorthi, for an opening statement.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to address why we're here today. We're here because sexual harassment remains a big problem in the workplace. Even as we tackle other challenges in our country, we must end sexual harassment.

Each year millions of fans, including myself, enjoy the NFL. NFL teams, coaches, and players influence public opinion on sensitive topics, too. For boys and young men, that means taking cues as to how they should treat women; and for girls and young women, cues as to how they should be treated.

That reality is why it's so important that the NFL hold itself to a, quote, "higher standard," as Commissioner Goodell has said, and why the NFL must ensure that those who fail to meet that standard are held accountable.

For the Washington Commanders, that reckoning unfortunately has not come. By its own admission, the NFL says that, quote, "The workplace culture at the Commanders was not only unprofessional, but toxic for far too long." Numerous women have accused team officials, including the current owner, of sexual misconduct.

Several years ago, another House Oversight Committee chair opened an inquiry into sexual harassment charges, that time involving USA Gymnastics, explaining that USA Gymnastics set the rules and policies that govern the sport of gymnastics and has a significant responsibility to its sport and athletes. That person was Republican Chair Trey Gowdy. We agree.

And, similarly, the NFL sets the rules and policies affecting pro football, and it, too, has a serious responsibility to uphold this sport. As one of America's most visible workplaces, the NFL also sets the tone for how employers handle sexual harassment.

Our colleagues on the other side have raised a number of issues worthy of this Committee's attention, from gas prices to the opioid crisis. We must continue to address those.

But at the same time, we must tackle sexual harassment, not just for the sake of the Commanders' former employees, but also for our constituents. Today we must send a clear message that the conduct that took place in the Commanders' organization is never acceptable, not in the NFL and not anywhere.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize the gentlelady from North Carolina, Representative Foxx, for an opening statement.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman, I'd like to echo the ranking member's comments today. This administration is doing all it can to annihilate America. It's like Nero fiddling while the country burns. It's been

widely reported that approximately 72 percent of Americans think the United States is on the wrong track.

Chairwoman, with unanimous consent, I'd like to submit this NBC News poll for the record.

Chairwoman MALONEY. So ordered.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you.

Are we looking into what caused the 40-year high inflation rate? No.

Are we examining how the FDA and Biden administration failed to address the baby formula shortage? No.

Are we examining how and why teens are purchasing illicit drugs on social media, leading to a record number of overdoses? No.

What about the crisis at the southern border? Are we doing anything to address the massive humanitarian and national security catastrophe? No.

Instead, this is another day when this Committee failed to do what the American people have elected us to do. Last week we had a hearing on pet collars, today a hearing over a single NFL team about workplace conduct that occurred years ago.

As the ranking member mentioned in his opening remarks, no one—no one—should be subjected to a hostile work environment. Bad actors must be held accountable.

This hearing is just another example of Democrats failing to conduct meaningful oversight of the Biden administration and the ongoing catastrophes fueled by President Biden's incompetent policies.

The NFL investigated this conduct, and ultimately the team punished the bad actors. The NFL is currently investigating additional claims made.

As we sit here today, many American families are wondering how they'll find formula for their babies or formula-dependent children. Families are wondering how they're going to pay for gas to get to their jobs or pay for groceries. Families are struggling to make ends meet. And the Biden administration continues to stand on the sidelines, sticking to their message that a recession is not inevitable. Families are feeling the squeeze now and there's no end in sight.

Children are suffering from extreme learning loss because Democrats bowed to the teachers' unions and kept schools closed for 18 months in some deep blue areas of this country.

The issues of the Washington Commanders and the NFL are the last thing on Americans' minds. What is this Committee doing to help families working to fix their wounded children and put food on the table? Nothing.

We must reevaluate our priorities as members of the Oversight Committee and refocus our energies on overseeing the Biden administration and the Federal Government to ensure the American people are not left behind.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back.

Now we will introduce our witness.

We will hear from Roger Goodell, the commissioner of the National Football League. The witness will be unmuted so we can swear him in.

Please raise your right hand.

Do you swear to affirm that the testimony you're about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. GOODELL. I do.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Let the record show that the witness answered in the affirmative.

Thank you. Without objection, your written statements will be made part of the record.

With that, Mr. Goodell, you are now recognized for your testimony.

STATEMENT OF ROGER GOODELL, COMMISSIONER, NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Mr. GOODELL. Thank you. Good morning, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, and members of the Committee.

I am Roger Goodell, commissioner of the National Football League, and I'm here today to discuss the NFL's efforts to promote safe and respectful workplaces, including at the Washington Commanders.

The Commanders are one of 32 NFL clubs, each of which is managed by its ownership and executives and have their own workplaces and policies.

Two years ago, the Commanders asked me to recommend independent counsel to address workplace issues and recommend changes to improve the workplace culture. We identified several candidates and the club suggested Beth Wilkinson, a distinguished former Federal prosecutor.

Approximately six weeks later, the club asked my office to assume oversight of the Wilkinson firm's work. The Wilkinson firm conducted a comprehensive review of the workplace at the club, interviewing more than 150 witnesses.

As a result, we gained a clear understanding of what the workplace had been at the Commanders, how it had begun to change, and what further steps were needed to support our ultimate goal of transforming that workplace to one that is safe and productive for all of its employees.

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to the men and women who shared their experiences during the investigation and to Beth Wilkinson and her team who did their work with the highest degree of integrity and professionalism. It required substantial courage for many to relive the painful experience and tell their individual stories. No one—no one—should experience workplaces like the one they described, especially not in the National Football League.

I can say to every victim unequivocally that their willingness to come forward has contributed to a substantially improved workplace.

It is clear to me that the workplace in Washington was unprofessional and unacceptable in numerous respects: bullying, widespread disrespect toward colleagues, use of demeaning language, public embarrassment, and harassment. Moreover, for a prolonged period of time, the Commanders had a woefully deficient H.R. func-

tion, particularly with respect to reporting practices and record-keeping.

As a result, we imposed unprecedented discipline on the club: monetary penalties of well over \$10 million and requirements that the club implement a series of recommendations and allow an outside firm to conduct regular reviews of their workplace.

In addition, for the past year, Daniel Snyder has not attended league or committee meetings and to the best of my knowledge has not been involved in day-to-day operations at the Commanders. The cheerleader program has been entirely revamped and is now a co-ed dance team under new leadership.

And the most recent independent workplace report, which we have shared with the Committee, confirms that an entirely new, highly skilled, and diverse management team is in place, and that there has been, quote, “substantial transformation of the team’s culture, leadership, and human resources practices,” end quote.

To be clear, the workplace at the Commanders today bears no resemblance to the workplace that has been described to this Committee. We did not receive a written report of Ms. Wilkinson’s findings for compelling reasons that continue to this day.

A critical element of any workplace review is broad participation by both current and former employees. Encouraging employees to come forward and share their experiences, which were frequently painful and emotional, was essential to identifying both the organization’s failures and how to fix them. To encourage this participation, Ms. Wilkinson promised confidentiality to any current or former employee.

For this reason, shortly after we assumed oversight of Ms. Wilkinson’s work, we determined that a comprehensive oral briefing was best to allow us to receive the information necessary, both to evaluate the workplace as it was and to ensure that the team put in place the policies and processes to reform that workplace, all while preserving the confidentiality of those who participated in the investigation.

Oral reports are often used by the NFL and other organizations in conducting internal investigations and for other issues. If appropriate, we will make public a summary of the key findings as we did here. We have been open and direct about the fact that the workplace culture at the Commanders was not only unprofessional, but toxic for far too long.

I’m aware that some victims, including those who appeared before this Committee, each of whom was invited to participate in Beth Wilkinson’s investigation, have chosen to share their experiences publicly, and I fully respect that choice. Many others made a different choice, and it is my responsibility to honor the commitment to protect their confidentiality.

I am confident that should there be another investigation at the NFL or our clubs where similar discretion is desired, future witnesses will feel comfortable sharing their experiences, knowing that we do not go back on our word.

When the Committee has asked questions or requested documents which could violate witness privacy, we have asserted privilege. We will continue to do so to safeguard our commitment.

Earlier this year, the Committee heard testimony from several former employees that included new and direct allegations against Mr. Snyder. We promptly engaged former U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White to investigate those allegations. Because those new allegations were brought to the Committee in a public setting, we will share the results of that investigation when it is completed and will take additional disciplinary action if warranted.

Since the Committee opened its inquiry last October, we have fully cooperated, producing more than 460,000 pages of documents, responding to many written questions, engaging in numerous discussions with Committee staff, and I am appearing voluntarily today.

We have not allowed the Commanders or its ownership or counsel to direct or make decisions regarding the work that was done by the Wilkinson firm, the work currently underway by Mary Jo White, or this Committee's inquiry.

Finally, I want to address the Committee's review of nondisclosure agreements. Our policies do not allow a club to use an NDA to bar someone from participating in a league investigation, and nobody who wished to speak to the Wilkinson firm was prevented from doing so by an NDA.

We also believe that people who come forward and want to maintain their privacy should be allowed to do so. The assurance that it was safe to participate, and that people could rely on the promise to protect their privacy allowed us to do a thorough review and make the necessary changes in the workplace.

I have been and remain committed to ensuring that all employees of the NFL and the 32 clubs work in a professional and supportive environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, or other forms of illegal or unprofessional conduct.

Thank you for inviting me today, and I will do my best to answer your questions.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you for your testimony and for coming today.

I now recognize myself for five minutes.

Mr. DONALDS. Madam Chair, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. DONALDS. Madam Chair, the U.S. Supreme Court case *U.S. v. Watkins* makes clear that Congress' investigative power must be related to and in the furtherance of a legitimate task of Congress.

Especially in light of the testimony by Mr. Goodell, how does continuing this hearing actually relate to a legitimate task of Congress in the face of record high inflation, record high gas prices, a completely unsecured border, a fentanyl crisis that is killing more people between the ages of 18 and 45 than any other cause in the United States, a baby formula crisis, a tampon crisis?

Madam Chair, the commissioner has just detailed in his own testimony that the Washington Commanders, Redskins, whatever you choose to call them, have been held accountable. They've made necessary reforms to the organization. You got a chair here for Mr. Snyder who told the Committee he was not going to be here.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. DONALDS. But, Madam Chair, what is the purpose of this—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. DONALDS. What is the purpose of this hearing?

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman will suspend. This is not about a stated parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. DONALDS. That is the parliamentary inquiry, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. And we have——

Mr. DONALDS. What is the purpose of this hearing?

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. DONALDS. You can bang the gavel all you want, but I don't really care.

What is the purpose of continuing this, Madam Chair? That is the parliamentary inquiry.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. DONALDS. And how does Congress' business actually be continued——

Chairwoman MALONEY. And we have put forward two important pieces of legislation that the gentleman can cosponsor.

Mr. DONALDS. How does Congress' business actually be continued by continuing this hearing?

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. All right. I now recognize myself for five minutes for questions.

The NFL's decision not to release the findings of an investigation into the toxic workplace culture at the Washington Commanders denied victims and the American people of a full accounting of what transpired at the team for the past 20 years.

Today the committee released new evidence documenting the toxic workplace at the Commanders, details that the NFL had not previously made public. We found that Dan Snyder refused to discipline coaching staff accused of sexual harassment. Instead, according to one executive, he tried to, quote, "make the problem go away," end quote.

We found that Mr. Snyder approved the firing of a cheerleader for having a relationship with a male team member but took no action against the male employee.

And we found that Mr. Snyder orchestrated a shadow investigation, sending private investigators to the homes of former employees, terrifying them, offering hush money, and compiling a dossier on his accusers.

Commissioner Goodell, do you think this is acceptable behavior for the owner of an NFL team? Mr. Goodell?

Mr. GOODELL. Chairwoman Maloney, that is exactly why we took this issue so seriously. It's exactly why we engaged an independent investigation with Beth Wilkinson and her firm. She had full access to be able to engage with anyone who chose to come forward.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Reclaiming my time, I have very limited time. And thank you for appearing and for your testimony.

We don't know how much more information is still out there because the NFL has refused to make the findings of the Wilkinson investigation public.

Commissioner Goodell, yes or no, will you commit today to providing this committee the full findings of the NFL's internal investigation while protecting the identities of the confidential witnesses?

Mr. GOODELL. We gave a summary report, Madam Chairwoman. The report was broad in its nature but specific to the fact that the culture at the Washington football team for too long was toxic and incorrect. We made a commitment to protect their identities. We are going to continue to do that and make sure that we protect that for—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Commissioner, reclaiming—

Mr. GOODELL [continuing]. Not only this investigation but also—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Commissioner, respectfully, Mr. Commissioner, reclaiming my time, because we have limited time.

You have claimed you're withholding this information because you're protecting the privacy of witnesses. But many victims, even in this room, and witnesses have publicly stated that they want—they want—this information to be released. And the NFL has made other investigations public—and I thank you for that—including the 2014 investigation into the workplace misconduct at the Miami Dolphins.

Respectfully, Mr. Commissioner, for full accountability, we must have transparency.

Mr. Snyder, of course, has refused to testify today. We thank you for making the Dolphins report public. We'd like to have the Wilkinson report made public. And I'm asking you, what specific steps will the NFL take to hold Mr. Snyder accountable for refusing to testify before Congress?

Mr. GOODELL. Madam Chairwoman, I do not have responsibility for whether he appears before Congress. That is not my choice. That is his choice.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. Let me stop you right here.

Mr. Snyder has not been held accountable. His refusal to testify sends a clear message that he is more concerned about protecting himself than coming clean with the American people.

If the NFL is unwilling or unable to hold Mr. Snyder accountable, then I am prepared to do so. That is why I am announcing now my intent to issue a subpoena for the testimony of Mr. Snyder for a deposition next week. The Committee will not be deterred in its investigation to uncover the truth of workplace misconduct at the Washington Commanders.

Finally, I'd like to talk about how we're going to fix this problem, not just expose it but fix it. Last week, along with many of my colleagues, we introduced two bills to ensure that employers like Dan Snyder cannot abuse nondisclosure agreements to silence employees and cannot film their employees and use it, use the films without their consent.

Commissioner, do you support the intent of these legislative reforms?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, Madam Chairman, we've had an opportunity to be able to see your outline of this legislation. And both these legislation and concept, we certainly support it, and be happy to work with your staff.

While I have the microphone, I'd also like to say, respectfully, that Dan Snyder has been held accountable. As I mentioned in the opening, he faced unprecedented discipline, including financial

finest, being removed and away from the team at his request for a period of time, up to the year now already.

And, second and more importantly, transformation of that organization that has gone on in the last year, which is really important to the employees that are there now. And I hope, because of the individuals that came forward in the context of this investigation, they helped us make those changes.

And we accepted every one of the workplace recommendations by Beth Wilkinson. And we think that it's had a dramatic impact, as you've seen from the independent audit that was done just before your hearing back in February that indicated a substantial transformation of the organization, which was our ultimate objective.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you very much for your testimony.

I want to thank you for your support of the legislation—

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chairman?

Chairwoman MALONEY.—which we intend to pass and protect employees not only at the Commanders, but across this Nation.

I yield back—

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chairman?

Chairwoman MALONEY.—and now recognize Ms. Foxx—

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chairman?

Chairwoman MALONEY.—for five minutes.

Mr.—

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chairman, I have got a parliamentary inquiry. Following up on what Mr. Donalds raised, by what authority is this Committee investigating a private business, a private entity, to hold this hearing? What authority do we have? Can you cite me that?

Chairwoman MALONEY. We have authority to investigate anything and everything, and we are putting forward legislation.

Mr. NORMAN. Anything—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Ms. Foxx, you are now recognized.

Mr. NORMAN. Anything and everything.

Mr. COMER. We'll remember that Madam Chair, in January.

Mr. NORMAN. That's a total embarrassment.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Ms. Foxx, you are now recognized for five minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Madam Chair. Would you allow—thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Goodell, I am disappointed that this Committee's here today squandering yet another opportunity to address the many issues facing our country. We have a chance to do something for the American people. But just like the Biden administration, this Committee's sitting on its hands.

Today's hearing is merely a distraction from skyrocketing inflation, unaffordable groceries, record gas and energy prices, supply chain issues, and our open southern border.

As we have heard in your testimony, the NFL has submitted more than 460,000 pages of documents, responded to many requests, and engaged in numerous discussions with Committee staff. It seems to me an awful lot of Committee—or, rather, taxpayer—resources were expended to investigate the Commanders and the

NFL, which are both private organizations that do not employ government officials and are not in the purview of this Committee.

Do you believe that this Committee's investigation is a good use of taxpayer funds?

Mr. GOODELL. Is that a question for me?

Ms. FOXX. Yes, sir.

Mr. GOODELL. Congresswoman, that is not a determination that I should be making.

Listen, I understand the importance of your responsibilities. I can't be the one who would tell you what you need to be focused on.

But we believe and we understand our responsibility in the NFL in today's society. We understand that. We do hold ourselves accountable. We hold ourselves to a high standard.

We believe that we've addressed this issue responsibly, fairly, by protecting not only the people who came forward to help us address this, but also making sure that we saw that transformation in the Washington Commanders organization, which is really a significant transformation.

Ms. FOXX. Well, to followup on what my colleagues are saying, this Committee has no jurisdiction over private entities. Our jurisdiction is on government entities.

So I want to reiterate, I think, what you said. You have no doubts about the independence of the Wilkinson investigation or its findings, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. I do not.

Ms. FOXX. Do you believe that somehow a congressional investigation would reach a different or, quote, "better" conclusion than the independent investigations conducted on behalf of the NFL?

Mr. GOODELL. I have tremendous regard for Beth Wilkinson and her team. They were thorough. They were comprehensive. We've made sure that NDAs did not block access to any of the people. It was their choice of which to participate. But we had over 150 people who came forward.

We believe we understand what the environment was at the Washington Commanders for far too long, and it was unacceptable, unprofessional, and we dealt with that. And I think we've now seen a dramatic turnaround in a very short period of time. I think that will be important for all of us.

Ms. FOXX. Well, I think the allegations against the Commanders were disturbing and appreciate you've taken them seriously in your role as commissioner.

You've also worked hard to promote inclusivity, specifically around women, in the game of football, from fans to coaches to referees to executives.

Can you tell me more about why that's important and what the NFL is doing in this space, and particularly talk about the importance of having women in day-to-day leadership roles, such as Tanya Snyder's?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, Congresswoman, we think diversity is an important element to our success. It's fundamental to what we do. We believe that having the best people, diverse people, including women and people of color, people that can contribute to the NFL

to make us better, that's a foundational issue for us. And so we have many programs to try to create that.

It's an ongoing effort. It will always be. We will never reach the goal line, as we say in football. But we do believe that we have made significant progress, but we're committed to making more progress. And I think the work that's being done here has made the NFL better. But I also think hopefully it's been a shining light for others to see that we have taken on our issues and made really significant improvement that people can see.

Ms. FOXX. I thank you for being here today and for testifying voluntarily.

I yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back.

And before I recognize the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia, Ms. Norton, I would like to clarify what I said before.

This Committee has the authority to investigate conduct within Congress' legislative jurisdiction, and that includes protecting women in the workplace. And this Committee and my colleagues and I have already introduced two bills to address the problems that we saw in our investigation, and I'll be glad to share them with anyone on the Committee.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Chair, just a question.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Do you have a point of order?

Mr. JORDAN. No, just a clarification.

Chairwoman MALONEY. No. OK. Clarification.

Mr. JORDAN. So when you said you had the authority to investigate anything and everything, you didn't really mean that?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Well, I just clarified what I said. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. JORDAN. No, I mean, it's a simple question.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. JORDAN. You didn't mean it when you said—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. JORDAN [continuing]. Anything and everything?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Reclaiming my time.

Some of my colleagues across the aisle have suggested that our investigation into workplace misconduct at the NFL is a waste of time. I strongly disagree. The issue of sexual harassment is one of the most prominent—in one of the prominent and respected workplaces in this country and a cover-up on behalf of a powerful owner should matter to all of us. It is even more surprising, given that this Committee has investigated sexual harassment and assault in sports, including when Republicans were in the majority.

In 2018, under the leadership of then Republican Chairman Trey Gowdy, the committee launched a bipartisan investigation into USA Gymnastics' handling of allegations against Larry Nassar.

In a letter to the President of USA Gymnastics signed by Chairman Gowdy, then Ranking Member Ms. Foxx—Member Cummings—also Ms. Foxx and myself, the Committee wrote, and I quote: "Sexual assault should not be tolerated. But when it does occur, it is imperative that swift and immediate action be taken to stop the abuse, prevent it from occurring, and address its effects," end quote.

I would like to enter the letter into the record.

Without objection, so ordered.

Chairwoman MALONEY. And we are here today to hold another sports governing body accountable, because the NFL has failed the thousands of employees that work for teams across the country. And that failure has endangered women across the NFL and sent a powerful message to every workplace that accountability is optional.

My time has expired. The gentlelady is recognized, Ms. Norton. And I place the letter in the record.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Goodell, in 2014 the NFL revised its personnel conduct policy. So I want to discuss a passage of that.

It said, "Ownership and club or league management have traditionally been held to a higher standard and will be subject to more significant discipline when violations of the personal conduct policy occur."

Mr. Goodell, can you briefly explain why the league holds owners to a higher standard of conduct?

Mr. GOODELL. Because they're ultimately accountable for what happens in their organization. They set the standard. And all of us in the NFL hold ourselves accountable to that.

Ms. NORTON. Well said, sir. I completely agree with that.

But Dan Snyder appears—with respect to Dan Snyder, it appears that did not happen. Before taking over the investigation, you admitted the NFL was monitoring the internal investigation. But as the committee investigation, our Committee's investigation confirmed, in July 2020 allegations of potential misconduct by Mr. Snyder were known by the investigators in the matter you were monitoring.

Mr. Goodell, did the NFL know about the 2009 allegations of sexual misconduct against Mr. Snyder before it took over the investigation, yes or no?

Mr. GOODELL. We did know about the 2009 allegations by July 2001—2000, excuse me—and we made sure that our independent investigator was aware of those allegations. And she was not blocked by NDAs. She had the ability to speak to anybody who was willing to come forward. It was their choice. She did speak to Mr. Snyder twice. So we were aware of that issue in that summer.

Ms. NORTON. So the NFL was monitoring the so-called independent investigation, yet it allowed Mr. Snyder to oversee the investigation of the team and his own conduct for at least six weeks before stepping in. Isn't that correct?

Mr. GOODELL. I'm sorry, Congresswoman. I'm not sure I followed your questioning there.

Ms. NORTON. That the NFL was monitoring the supposed independent investigation, yet, though you were doing that, the NFL allowed Mr. Snyder to oversee the investigation of the team and his own conduct for at least six weeks before stepping in. Isn't that correct?

Mr. GOODELL. Congresswoman, I think I would try to clarify that—and I said it in my opening statement—is that we were asked to give recommendations for counsel to be able to look into the workplace issues. We gave them several candidates. They selected Beth Wilkinson, which is an excellent choice.

They began that investigation. And within several weeks, it was no more than six weeks to my recollection, they asked to have that investigation turned over to the league. We accepted to do that, but we said there would be no further investigations by the Washington Football Team at that point, we would take over this investigation.

And we did with an independent. And she went ahead, and she made her decisions on how to conduct this investigation independently. And that's what we expected from her, and she did an outstanding job on that.

Ms. NORTON. I'm glad you did that after that six-week period.

Mr. Goodell, will you commit today that if any future allegations against a team owner alleging misconduct arise that the NFL will conduct an independent investigation, not the team under inquiry, yes or no?

Mr. GOODELL. As part of the personal conduct policy, if there was an allegation that triggered that, the league would take over that investigation.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you for that, for making that point clear.

I yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back.

Mr. COMER. Madam Chair, before we go to the next questioner, I would like to formally request that former NFL player Burgess Owens be waived on the committee today.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection. And welcome.

OK. The gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Jordan, is now recognized.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Commissioner, you believe in the First Amendment, don't you?

Mr. GOODELL. I do.

Mr. JORDAN. I mean, all parts of it, all, you know, all rights we have, your right to practice your faith, your right to petition the government, right to assemble, freedom of press, freedom of speech, you believe in all that.

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, Congressman.

Mr. JORDAN. Why do you ban Dave Portnoy from NFL games?

Mr. GOODELL. Pardon me? I couldn't hear your question.

Mr. JORDAN. Why do you ban Dave Portnoy from NFL games? He's a journalist. In fact, he's a sport journalist. Why is he banned?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, I'm not familiar with that issue. I'm happy to check with my staff, but I'm not aware of that.

Mr. JORDAN. Really?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. JORDAN. Well, I think we're all aware of that. I mean, he interviewed the President of the United States. Interviewed President Trump in the White House. Seems to me if he can get into the White House, he should be able to get into a football game, particularly as a member of the press and a member of the sports press.

Do you know anything about that?

Mr. GOODELL. I don't, sir.

Mr. JORDAN. Do you agree with the Washington Redskins' decision to fine Jack Del Rio \$100,000?

Mr. GOODELL. That was the decision that was made by Coach Rivera. Again, as I stated earlier, they are responsible for monitoring

and managing their own workplace. He made that decision on his own. I did not speak to him. I have great respect for Coach Rivera. He made his decision for reasons I'm sure that he thought were important.

Mr. JORDAN. But I—I appreciate all—I appreciate all that, Commissioner. But that's not what I asked you. I said, do you agree with the Washington Redskins' decision to fine Jack Del Rio \$100,000?

Mr. GOODELL. I don't think it's my position to be able to say whether it was the correct decision or not.

Mr. JORDAN. Well, Mr.—Coach Rivera in his statement, when he fined his assistant coach \$100,000, he said Del Rio, quote, “does have the right to voice his opinion as a citizen of the United States, and it is most certainly his constitutional right to do so.”

I don't know if that's actually accurate anymore because, if you do voice that, you end up getting fined and have to write a check for \$100,000.

Does that concern you?

Mr. GOODELL. I, again, have great respect for Coach Rivera. I presume that he had reasons for doing what he did, and I'm sure he took a lot of factors into consideration there.

Mr. JORDAN. Last year at the start of the season—I'm looking at *The New York Times* article, a piece from September 5, 2021—last year, start of the NFL season, you made this statement. You said, “We, the National Football League, encourage all to speak out and peacefully protest.”

Did you really mean that when you said that, Mr. Goodell?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes. I think people are always responsible for what they say and what they do. But yes.

Mr. JORDAN. And when you said you encourage all to speak out, you meant all, not just some.

Mr. GOODELL. That's correct, Congressman. But you're responsible for what you say. There are consequences for what you do and say in life.

Mr. JORDAN. Yes. So, see, I mean, this is the concern I have. It seems to me the NFL encourages all to speak out, unless you're Dave Portnoy and not allowed to a game, unless you're Jack Del Rio, you get fined. That is, I think, the concern not only I have, but a lot of your fans across this country have this standard.

Does that concern you at all?

Mr. GOODELL. It always concerns me what our fans think and how they react. But we try to make sure that we're responsible in all our comments.

Mr. JORDAN. Yes, let me just read the tweet from Mr. Del Rio. It said, “Would love to understand the whole story about why the summer of riots, looting, burning, and the destruction of personal property is never discussed but January 6 is.”

What part of that statement, what part of that tweet warranted a \$100,000 fine?

Mr. GOODELL. Again, Congressman, I didn't issue the fine. I wasn't part of the decisionmaking process. Coach Rivera obviously had reasons which he believed were substantial to do that, and I have great respect for him.

Mr. JORDAN. Yes, but, I mean, this whole hearing is about the NFL stepping in when something happened at the Washington Football Team's organization. And now we had something that happened in the Washington Football Team's organization, and you said you had no part of that, you're not going to comment on it, it's not something that should concern you.

But it seems like it should when an assistant coach issues a tweet that I think a lot of people—a lot of people would say, you know what, we condemned, we Republicans condemned the violence that took place in the summer of 2020 and we condemned the violence that took place on January 6th. We've been consistent.

I think that was the point the coach was making. He gets fined, and you have nothing to say about it.

Mr. GOODELL. I am not going to interfere with the workplace decisions that a club makes on a matter like that. That is not a—that is not something that rises to the occasion such as the subject that we're talking about today, when you have a workplace that is obviously toxic and unacceptable and unprofessional. That is as much information—

Mr. JORDAN. No one supports that, but we do support the First Amendment. And I understand this is a private organization. But the chilling impact when speech is curtailed like this and you get fined for a tweet that you put out, I think that is a concern to all of us. That's why I raise it in the Committee hearing today.

Madam Chair, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired. He yields back.

The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Connolly, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the chair and thank her for accommodating me today. I will just begin by saying there's a lot of chutzpah coming from the other side of the aisle. When the Republican was in the majority under my predecessor, Tom Davis, when he was chairman, had no problem having hearings on steroids and baseball, also a sports issue, also a private entity. But there were no questions about jurisdiction then. And when it comes to being lectured about the lack of oversight, I remember four long years in the Trump administration, not a single Republican voted for a single subpoena during those four years, and we had no oversight hearings on our Committee over the Trump administration and its misdeeds, and God knows that was feral territory. So I'm not going to be lectured by those folks telling us about our dereliction of duty and oversight.

Mr. Goodell, do you believe the NFL has held Mr. Snyder and others accountable for 20 years of misconduct at what is now called the Commanders?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, I do.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Do you believe you've held him to account?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Sufficiently?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes. Most importantly, Congressman, I think we were able to, in addition to the accountability, be able to effectuate change in the organization that, as I mentioned before, is a substantial transformation. We—

Mr. CONNOLLY. This substantial——

Mr. GOODELL. Part of——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Let's talk about that substantial transformation. Instead of releasing the Wilkinson report, you issued a four-page press release. And inter alia, you said in that four-page press release, ownership and senior management actually paid little or no attention to these issues documented in the Wilkinson report; is that correct?

Mr. GOODELL. I don't have the release in front of me, but——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, all right. But the Committee's investigation has shown that's actually not true. Mr. Snyder paid lots of attention in ordering executives to fire cheerleaders who fraternized with players. He told other executives to keep cheerleaders, quote, "skinny with big"—and here he used a pejorative word to describe a part of the female anatomy—or he said he'd kill them.

He intervened in H.R. decision after H.R. decision personally, deciding never to punish the favorite coach who groped lower-level employees, but punished the women in those cases, not the men, in a very consistent pattern.

We've also now learned that there are at least two sexual assault allegations about him personally.

Were you aware of that when you issued the statement that you, you know, he paid little or no attention to these issues?

Is that news to you?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, as I stated, I think, earlier, the latest allegation was from your roundtable this February. So I was not aware of that until that time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. So does that change your mind now that you're aware of it?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, that's why we appointed Mary Jo White to look into to determine whether the allegation and what the facts are behind the allegation. We'll release that report when it's completed, because she brought that up in a public setting.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, you're committing now to release that report?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, I am, because she brought it up in a public setting, Congressman. I stated that in my opening.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Oh, so is that distinction you're making between the Wilkinson report and the White report? One was brought up in a public setting and the other was not?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I don't get it because virtually——

Mr. GOODELL. As I said in my opening, I also made the distinction, it's a very important distinction, is that to get people to participate, Congressman, we promised them confidentiality and privacy. And the important thing for us is to be able to stand behind that, not just for this case with the Washington Commanders, but——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Commissioner, I've got one minute——

Mr. GOODELL. Future cases—people need——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Commissioner, I understand that, but you're acting as if the victims have not subsequently, in fact, called for the public release of the report. Virtually every victim we've met with in our roundtable, in private meetings we've had—I've got a lot of

constituents who are victims of this culture, all of them have called for the release of the report. They've even created T-shirts saying, "release the report."

So your concern about privacy, while commendable, seems to have been overtaken by the need for—for the public to understand what happened and to determine on its own based on that report, whether that culture unlike what you assert is continuing.

Mr. GOODELL. But Congressman, I would disagree with you respectfully on many occasions. There are obviously people who have come out. I mentioned, again, that in my opening statement. You have had witnesses who came forward, and I respect them for that choice. But there are also others who have made a choice not to come forward, not to disclose their identities, and to request that their identities be kept private. We think that's fundamental in the concept of trying to make sure—to the Committee's point here, none of us want sexual harassment or bad workplaces.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I understand—

Mr. GOODELL. We think it's fundamental to have a workplace that people can come forward and tell of incidents, and they can be followed up. We also think that—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Commissioner—

Mr. COMER. Madam Chair, his time has expired.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired. Thank you for your questions, though. Thank you very much.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Donalds—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chair—Madam Chair, can I just make a point? Last time I checked, you're the chair of the Committee. It's up to you to decide when my time is up, not Mr. Comer. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Your time is up.

The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Donalds, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Look, I think it's important in this hearing to clarify a couple of things. Was the workplace environment at the Washington Redskins/Commanders abhorrent? The Commissioner has testified yes, in the previous roundtable, everybody agreed to that.

Has the organization been held accountable through financial fines, the distancing of Mr. Snyder from the team for an extended period of time, and with transformation of team culture? The answer to all of those is yes as testified by the Commissioner of the National Football League. It's been brought up in this hearing that, yes, four years ago when Mr. Gowdy was chair of this Committee, that we did investigate sexual harassment associated with U.S.A. Gymnastics. But it's important to understand the context of those hearings.

The disgusting actions of Dr. Nassar were actually coming to light at the same time as Congress was holding those hearings, at the same time as that was moving through the criminal procedures. So let's understand what we're talking about here. The workplace environment of the Washington Redskins at that period of time was abhorrent. Everybody in this hearing agrees with that.

But have they been held accountable? According to the Commissioner, yes, they have been held accountable, which goes back to

point that Republicans on this Committee are actually saying. If you want to bring legislation about this, that's fine. That's one thing. But if you want to sit a chair in this middle of this hearing room with Mr. Snyder's name on it knowing full well that Mr. Snyder told the Committee he was not going to be able to attend, well, that takes on the elements of a show hearing.

And if Congress is going to go through the pathway of conducting show hearings where Members of Congress want to take their pound of flesh from American citizens regardless of their stature, what you're going to get is American citizens actually having less respect for the committees of Congress. We have so many issues facing us in the United States right now.

Gas prices are through the roof. I was just at the border for the fourth time last week. I've had four trips to the border. The President of the United States has never been. Meanwhile, fentanyl is coming into every community in the United States. It is killing people in our country between the ages of 18 and 45. It is the No. 1 cause of death. This Committee has said nothing about fentanyl to this point. Not one word. We've not done it here.

So I think if you're going to examine why Republican Members are frustrated with this hearing, it is not about the conduct of the Washington Redskins. It's not about that conduct, because we find that conduct to be distasteful. But you have to also look at the facts that the National Football League, which is the entity responsible for the Washington Redskins, they've gone through that investigation. They've actually held the team accountable.

So what are we doing now? Are we actually going to ignore the real-life economic issues that are harming every American in the United States, whether you happen to be male or female, whether you happen to be rich or poor, whether you happen to be black or white, or are we going to continue to do these show hearings?

Yes, while America struggles in the reality of Joe Biden's disastrous economic policies today in the United States.

That is the ire—that is the—that is why Members of Congress on the Republican side of the aisle are so confounded as to why we've hauled in the Commissioner from the NFL. Look, I'm going to be fully transparent which y'all. I ain't really got no love for the NFL, OK? You know, like, I don't really have much love for the NFL. I love football. I've had my issues with certain rulings that have come from the NFL.

There's things that, Commissioner Goodell, I don't agree with your decisions on certain things that you've done in your tenure, but I'm not going to use my time as a Member of Congress to grill you on that. That is your business as running the NFL. If the owners have a problem with you, let the owners deal with it. Me, personally, I'm a Cowboys fan. So, you know, if the product on the field of the Washington Commanders is not good, that's great for me personally. But I'm not going to use my time as a Member of Congress to grill that organization when they've already been held accountable by the governing body who is responsible for them, which is the NFL, which the Commissioner of the NFL has already testified to today.

So Madam Chair, if you want to understand why Members on this side of the aisle are frustrated, it's not about holding a sexual

harassment in the workplace accountable. It is not that. It is about us conducting show trials, which distract us from the business Congress should be looking at.

And with that, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back. And I'd like to remind him that during the hearing with the cheerleaders earlier, you called for the release of the Wilkinson report, and I agree with you completely. We're still working to get that report released. It's a bipartisan effort with your call for it.

The gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Krishnamoorthi, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Commissioner, for being here today. Sir, I'd like to turn your attention to this chart I have here to my right. This chart shows us the length and detail of reports released after recent NFL investigations.

On the far right is Deflategate, which examined the air pressure in footballs used by Tom Brady, and following that inquiry, you released a 243-page detailed report. Next to it is the Miami Dolphins sexual harassment inquiry, and after that you released a 148-page detailed report. And next to that bar is the Ray Rice domestic violence situation, where you released a 96-page detailed report following that inquiry. Now, with regard to the Commanders, unfortunately, we received a five-page press release, sir.

Now, sir, you had mentioned that the reason for the press release as opposed to a detailed finding as you had in the other cases was because of privacy concerns; isn't that right?

Mr. GOODELL. That was one of the issues, yes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. However, I have this 148-page Miami Dolphins harassment report that you did, where you have redacted the names of various individuals out of privacy concerns. And so, it is possible to release a detailed report, and at the same time, protect people's privacy, yet you chose not to do so in this particular case with the Commanders.

Sir, I'd like to turn your attention to 2009. You're aware that in 2009, Dan Snyder was accused of sexually assaulting an employee on a private airplane, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. Am I aware of that? Yes, I'm aware of that allegation.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. And sir, Mr. Snyder settled those claims for \$1.6 million, but he did not inform you in 2009 that he'd been accused of sexual assault, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. I don't recall him informing of that, no.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. And failing to report such an incident under the League's personal conduct policy would be a violation of that policy, right?

Mr. GOODELL. It's an element of the policy that they're supposed to report incidents that would violate the policy, yes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. And, moreover, the policy requires that the NFL handle all inquiries into sexual assault allegations, not the team. However, in this particular case, the Commanders, themselves, handled the inquiry, so that's yet another violation of the personal conduct policy; isn't that right?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, Mr. Chairman, this is something that—our personal conduct policy has gone through changes over the last—I would say the last 15 years, of significant changes, to take care and address issues that we see need clarifications. And clearly, we made significant changes in 2014 with our personal conduct policy because we believe it needed to have—

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. But the NFL is supposed to be in charge of the investigation, right?

Mr. GOODELL. Today, that is absolutely correct. Yes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. And if the sexual assault allegations are substantiated, that assault would obviously be a violation of personal conduct policy as well, because sexual assault is a violation of the personal conduct policy in the NFL, right?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Now, let me direct your attention to the case of Tiffany Johnson. She came before us and testified before me at the February roundtable and answered my questions, basically alleging that Mr. Snyder intentionally touched her in a sexual manner against her will during a work dinner, and that is why you hired Mary Jo White to investigate those allegations, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. That is correct.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. And as you sit here today, you don't have personally—personally, any knowledge of evidence that would dispute her allegations as you sit here today?

Mr. GOODELL. That's an ongoing investigation that's being handled by Mary Jo White. She's very capable of doing that. She'll report back to me when she's completed the investigation, and we've made it clear—

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. And if it is substantiated—if it's substantiated, Ms. Johnson's sexual battery claim would certainly warrant further disciplinary action, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. It's an ongoing investigation. So it would be inappropriate for me to comment on that. But we said before that we would consider discipline if the results of the investigation warrant it.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. So let me ask you this: You called the Commanders' workplace not only unprofessional, but toxic for too long.

Sir, in your view, is Dan Snyder's behavior in the workplace culture he created and fostered one of the worst and most toxic you've seen in your time as Commissioner and your decades of service in the NFL?

Mr. GOODELL. I have not seen a workplace in the NFL that is anywhere near what we saw in the context of that period of time for the Washington Commanders.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Sir, with all the challenges we have going on as a country, why is it important that we still put an end to sexual harassment and a toxic work environment at the Washington Commanders?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, I think we have—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman may answer, but the gentleman's time has expired. You may answer, but his time has expired.

Yes, Mr. Goodell. Go ahead.

Mr. GOODELL. I think we have made those changes and as I've said, it's verified by independent auditors that the changes have been made and the organization will continue to do that. But I don't think any of us want to have workplaces that are not safe, not allow all of our employees to feel safe and to be productive without harassment or without discrimination or any other issues that would be negative in a professional workplace.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

The gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. Comer, you are now recognized for five minutes.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Madam Chair. Before I begin my questions for Mr. Goodell, I'm going to have to correct the record once again for Mr. Connolly. This is becoming a habit. I believe, Madam Chair, he's hanging out with Adam Schiff too much here lately. He just keeps making things up.

In 2017, when the Republicans were in control of this Committee, we had 112 Trump administration witnesses testify. In 2018, Republicans still in control of this Committee, we had 59 administration witnesses. That was during the tenure of Chaffetz and Gowdy. In 2019, when the Democrats retook the majority, you had 80 Trump administration witnesses testify. This year, now that Biden's President, you've had only 36 low-level career civil servants testify and no Cabinet Secretary. So I wanted to correct the record of what Mr. Connolly said. That was completely false.

Commissioner Goodell, when did you learn this Committee was investigating the Washington Commanders?

Mr. GOODELL. I'm sorry. What—I'm sorry, Ranking Member?

Mr. COMER. When did you learn this Committee was investigating the Washington Commanders?

Mr. GOODELL. I believe it as late October of last year, 1921.

Mr. COMER. Were you surprised?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. COMER. Why?

Mr. GOODELL. Because I thought we had handled this situation in a way that was responsible for a workplace. We had, as I said, implemented unprecedented discipline. We had made the changes to transform the workplace. So it was—

Mr. COMER. One reason—Let me get this straight, one reason you were surprised was because the NFL took action and held the bad actors accountable. And another reason would probably be because Congress really has no jurisdiction over the day-to-day operations of the NFL.

The committee Democrats asked the NFL to produce documents, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. COMER. A lot of documents, right?

Mr. GOODELL. I think we're over 460,000.

Mr. COMER. 450,000. Nearly half a million documents.

Mr. GOODELL. 60.

Mr. COMER. Would it surprise you, Mr. Goodell, that committee Democrats haven't sent a single document request to the Biden administration about the infant formula shortage, but they've requested half a million documents from the NFL?

Does that surprise you?

Mr. GOODELL. I'm not sure I have a point of view on that one. I was only focusing on what the NFL was requesting.

Mr. COMER. The Democrats haven't even—just make this point, sir, the Democrats haven't even sent document requests to the Biden administration about the botched withdrawal from Afghanistan, or the COVID origination or the impacts of school closures on kids, or what they're doing about illegal immigrants and fentanyl streaming across the southern border, about skyrocketing inflation, energy prices, not one request on these problems. I think that's what the people in my district in Kentucky care about. I'm pretty sure that's what most people in America care about.

But Commissioner, you had Beth Wilkinson conduct an investigation in the workplace conduct of the Washington Commanders. And Mary Jo White's in the midst of a related one. You've already stated that.

And you've also stated the Commanders have made dramatic improvements at its organization; is that correct?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. COMER. So why are we here?

Why do you think we're here today?

Because that's what a lot of the people on my side of the aisle, Republican Members, minority Members, you know, why are we here?

Why do you think we're here, sir?

Mr. GOODELL. Ranking Member, I was given an invitation, and I felt it appropriate to show up when Congress asked me to show up. And I believe that this matter was handled appropriately, and I wanted to make sure I stated our point on that.

Mr. COMER. And you believe—let me get this right, you believe that Dan Snyder has been held accountable for a past toxic work environment, but the NFL continues to go in and monitor the situation.

And how would you describe the current situation of the work environment in the Redskins or Commanders Football Program? How are things today in the NFL's view?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, Ranking Member, it's not just the NFL going in. More importantly, it's an independent organization, Vestry Laight, that is auditing, goes in, and is meeting with employees, going through processes, checking with HR. Again, we had very woeful H.R. processes for too long in that organization. They've been implemented into the organization now. It is actually a very professionally run organization from an H.R. standpoint.

I think employees from reports that I've seen in this, that you also have a copy of, employees feel comfortable with the environment in the workplace. They see a dramatic change. And I think that the changes that the Commanders have made, including implementing new executive leadership from President Jason Wright to Coach Rivera, I think you see a dramatic change in the organization.

And Dan Snyder made those—I understand Dan Snyder made those changes. But I also believe that Beth Wilkinson's recommendations to the workplace, the 10 recommendations she made, were very important to implement. And that's why we have ongoing oversight to that to make sure that that continues, which

I think is the most important objective when we began this, is not just the accountability, but really to make sure that we change the direction of this workplace, and make sure that it was safe for our employees.

Mr. COMER. Very good.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired. Thank you.

The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Raskin, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

After *The Washington Post* expose of decades of sexual harassment in the team, Dan Snyder announced he'd be conducting an independent investigation into the toxic workplace culture. But then when allegations surfaced implicating Mr. Snyder himself, the NFL said it was taking over the investigation. So far so good.

But then in September 2020, Mr. Goodell, you entered into a secret common interest agreement with Dan Snyder's team to share information about the investigation, which included an investigation into his own conduct, but you never told the women who were participating in interviews with Ms. Wilkinson that there was this secret agreement to share information. So now Mr. Snyder got access to these interviews.

How is that protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the women, which you've asserted is your key value here?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, the common interest agreement—and I'm not an attorney—is a legal document that helps us transfer the Commanders' investigation to the League investigation. It is an agreement that did not prevent us from sharing information.

Mr. RASKIN. No. It guaranteed that you would share information, right?

Mr. GOODELL. No. It allowed us to make sure that we could continue the investigation with Beth Wilkinson so that she would not have to go back and have to meet with some of the people she'd already met as witnesses and have to go through that entire process again.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. But let me—

Mr. GOODELL. Nothing—nothing in that common interest agreement—and by the way, I'll just point out too that common interest agreement was entered into just a couple of weeks after we took over the investigation when it was clear—well, before it was clear that this Committee was even focused on this issue.

Mr. RASKIN. Right. This Committee has nothing to do with it. The point is, that Mr. Snyder had access to all of the interviews of the women whose confidentiality interest you're now purporting to assert.

I'm puzzled by this, too: Why would you pay hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars to investigate sexual harassment in a toxic workplace environment, but then publish no written report about it?

You had a 243-page written report on Deflategate, as my colleague from Illinois pointed out, and you had another published report about sexual harassment with the Miami Dolphins where the names were redacted where people felt there was a confidentiality problem.

Why wasn't redaction sufficient to protect the anonymity of the women who were involved in the case of the Washington team?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, if I may, I just want to, I think, clarify something. To my knowledge, and my understanding is Dan Snyder did not have access to those interviews that Beth Wilkinson had done, even while the team was overseeing that—

Mr. RASKIN. So you're saying—he's never seen those interviews you're saying?

Mr. GOODELL. Not to my knowledge, and I don't believe so.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. Why wasn't redaction sufficient to protect the anonymity of the women being interviewed in the case of the Washington team when it was sufficient in the case of the Dolphins?

Mr. GOODELL. In the case of the Dolphins, my recollection was no one had asked for any confidentiality. Not only in the Washington matter—

Mr. RASKIN. They did because. Your names were redacted. Please.

Mr. GOODELL. Not only in Washington did they ask for confidentiality in many cases, we also promised them confidentiality to make sure—

Mr. RASKIN. That's what redaction is for. OK. That's what redaction is.

Mr. GOODELL. Redaction—Congressman, with all due respect redaction doesn't always work in my world. I promise you. We needed to take extra steps to make sure these people who did come through and courageously come forward—

Mr. RASKIN. All right. I've got to reclaim my time here because I've got another question for you.

Between August 2020 and April 21 while the Wilkinson investigation was taking place, Dan Snyder conducted a parallel investigation of the women who spoke out, and he filed 10 lawsuits in seven states around the country in an effort to expose and undermine those women who had allegedly participated in *The Washington Post* series.

One Federal judge described Snyder's legal actions as quote, "an effort to burden and harass individuals formally associated with the team who may have acted as sources for *The Washington Post*, adding that the subpoenas that he issued were, quote, being done for what the court perceives is an improper purpose, to discover the sources for the embarrassing and damning *The Washington Post* story."

So did you do anything to try to stop Dan Snyder from harassing these women in court after they'd been sexually harassed, and do you condemn this action by Mr. Snyder?

Mr. GOODELL. I think any action that would discourage people from coming forward would be inappropriate and absolutely wrong. In fact, when we took over the investigation, we told the Washington Commanders that they were not to do any investigations. By April 1921, I think is the date you gave me, my recollection from your question, we were in the final stages. And Beth had probably met with most of the men and women that wanted to come forward. We were getting close to concluding our investigation or Beth's investigation.

Mr. RASKIN. So you condemned that form of illegal harassment against the women who came forward?

Mr. COMER. The chair's time—

Mr. GOODELL. As I said, any kind of harassment against people who want to come forward and tell the truth, we would not permit, and we would not find acceptable.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The gentleman, you are allowed to respond to his question.

OK. We now recognize from Texas, Mr. Fallon. The gentleman from Texas.

Mr. FALLON. Commissioner, thank you. I want to be frank with you, I'm angry and I'm concerned. Last week marked the 50th anniversary of Watergate, which was a scandal that led to a series of felony convictions and the first resignation of a United States President, that tore at the very fabric of American society. In a scant 7-1/2 years ago, another scandal rocked our Nation, threatening the very core and foundation of our republic, that being, of course, Deflategate, where in an AFC championship game, the NFL footballs, the pigskins, the rock, the pill, the hen egg, the melon and the leather was mysteriously under-inflated by two PSI, pounds per square inch. This led to a multifaceted investigation, months long, thousands of dollars spent, where the GOAT, Mr. California cool, the real slim Brady, the master of the tuck, the lord of the rings, Tom Terrific, Tom Brady was suspended by the League.

Mr. Commissioner, I'm sure you're aware that many in New England worship Thomas Edward Patrick Brady, Jr., as a demigod of sorts, and being a New England native myself, I don't blame them one bit. So my point here, sir, is that this country simply can't afford another scandal, particularly a preventable one. So I'm surprised in reviewing the League rules to prepare for this hearing, this critical hearing, we uncovered that the NFL requires footballs today to be inflated to a gage pressure of between 12.5 and 13.5 PSI, and the rules don't state and specify the temperature at which these measurements are to be made. And the pressure temperature law states that there is a positive correlation between the temperature and the pressure of a gas when there's a fixed volume and mass.

So how can we, Commissioner, guarantee the consistency of the PSI levels of footballs moving forward?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, Congressman, it's been quite a while since I focused on this issue, but I'll tell you, our procedures now are that our game officials make that check prior to the game. And so, they are the ones to do that individually, and then the balls are under protected order from that point on. They are not allowed to be tampered with from that point on. So I think, hopefully, we found that consistency, and make sure that the rules apply to everyone, and that they're applied equally.

Mr. FALLON. Commissioner, are you currently in New York City?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, I am.

Mr. FALLON. All right. So you're at sea level, and we're here in Washington, DC. at sea level.

So, sir, what do we do in Denver at Mile High Stadium, 5,280 feet high above sea level, and how do we account for the variances

that could and do occur when there's differing atmospheric pressures vis-&-vis the PSI and your balls?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, Congressman, it's one of the reasons why—and several of your colleagues have mentioned, that we had a lengthy report following Deflategate. And the reason why is because we had several studies that went 50 pages or more talking about these exact issues. I can't recite exactly what they were at this point in time. But they considered altitude. They considered temperature. They considered all those issues in the variants. That's why that report was so lengthy is because we wanted to put those procedures out, as well as the research that went into that.

Mr. FALLON. Well, Mr. Commissioner, I'd like to offer my sincere apologies, because this hearing, as I said earlier, I'm angry and upset because this hearing is a sham, and it's a farce, and it's a clown show. And it's a terrible waste of your time as a CEO of a multibillion dollar privately held enterprise. It's a waste of this Committee's time. And worst of all, it's a waste of American taxpayers' time. We're here suffering inflation at a 41-year high, 8.6 percent; gasoline at \$5 a gallon, highest it's ever been in our history.

We have a southern border wide open, more porous than in 250 years, and the drug cartels are making record profits, and this unchecked narcotics trafficking has fueled an opioid crisis, which is directly responsible for the deaths of 100,000 Americans. That's why I mentioned I was angry, and I'm upset. And we're here harassing the NFL, and I might add, engaging in a partisan bizarre witch hunt of an NFL team and trespassing without just cause into the internal affairs of a privately held entity when we face these other crises on multiple fronts. Quite frankly, it's disgusting. It's a disgrace.

And Madam Chair, we can and must do better. I yield back.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY.

[Presiding.] Thank you, Mr. Fallon. And we're going to have the ONDCP director next Monday, so you can direct those questions about the drug trade to him.

We are going to now call on Mr. Khanna for his five minutes of questions.

Mr. KHANNA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you also to you, Representative Krishnamoorthi, Chairman Krishnamoorthi, for your leadership on these issues. I know you've been advocating and leading on these issues for a number of years just to have basic equality in all our workplaces.

Chairman Goodell, I'm a, of course, 49ers fan. I represent Silicon Valley, and I'm a fan not of just the team on the field, but I'm sure you know Hannah Gordon there who's a senior executive, and she has participated on a number of panels actually in Silicon Valley about creating a workplace that empowers women, about making sure that women have equal pay, about tackling issues of childcare, about tackling issues of discrimination, and she's, I think, extraordinary. She's really helped shape the culture of the 49ers.

So my question for you is, do you look at clubs like the 49ers and extraordinary leaders like Hannah Gordon in seeing what best practices may be for all the clubs in the League?

Mr. GOODELL. We absolutely do. Hannah Gordon was a former employee of ours. She is outstanding. She's a true professional. She made a difference here in our organization, and she's doing that again with the 49ers. I have nothing but respect for her.

But as part of the changes that happened over the last several years is an elevation, I would call it, of sharing of best practices amongst all our clubs from this office, as well as the 32 clubs. As we stated earlier, they all have their own work forces and workplaces. Those are their prerogative, but we do believe that understanding and sharing is an important element to making sure we have better workplaces.

We also, at the league level, have had many times where we require certain training mechanisms. Some of that came out of 2014 with respect to domestic violence and sexual assault. All personnel are required to go through annual training. In addition, we made sure that sexual harassment is a requirement of all personnel in the NFL, that includes clubs, leagues, owners, commissioners, so that we can do everything we possibly can to make sure that our work forces and workplaces are safe, and people have a full understanding of what's expected of them.

Mr. KHANNA. I appreciate that, and I hope you'll look not just to Hannah Gordon and the leadership on issues of gender and equity, but the 49ers in my district have provided STEM education for people left out.

I guess my point, Chairman Goodell, is I know people focused on the legal issues, but you know this better than I do, that if you look at the top three or four shows that the American public watch, I was shocked when I realized this; it's Sunday Night Football, Monday Night Football, Thursday Night Football. NCIS is the only one that competes.

And I think you would agree that given the cultural significance of the NFL, and I grew up as a football fan, many of us in Congress are football fans. I think there's a higher bar where what you do really matters to shaping the culture of the Nation. And I guess my request and my plea to you would be to realize that responsibility. Obviously, on issues of gender, of issues of equality, of issues of helping get young people involved in the STEM and education, and just realize that, you know, you have a huge platform and make a big difference to the culture of the country.

And that's, I think, spirit of these hearings as opposed to some legalistic dispute is just what can you do with the platform you have?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, I could not agree with you more. We take that responsibility seriously. We understand the impact we have in our communities, as well as nationally and even globally. And that's why we have worked hard to try to meet that standard. We're not perfect, but we work hard whenever we see something that we can improve on. We dig in, and we do our best to make sure that we're a leading voice and something—an institution that people can look to to say, they're doing things the right way.

I appreciate your comments. It's well beyond gender. To your point, it's diversity in general. It's making sure that we do everything in our communities, including making sure that our commu-

nities are addressing the difficult issues that some of you have talked about today and making sure that our teams are playing an active force in some of that, whether it's our work on how do we get people to vote. Our clubs are actively using their facilities, they're actively using their platform of which to encourage people to get out and vote.

Mr. KHANNA. I appreciate that. Thank you for your time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Thank you, Mr. Khanna.

Now, I'm going to be calling on Mr. Grothman for his five minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you. As was just pointed out, Mr. Goodell, you have attracted tens of millions of dollars from Americans who watch your games every week. You've got a large, captive audience.

Would you agree the NFL has a tremendous amount of power and ability to influence American culture?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, Congressman, I think I just made that point. I agree with you.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I'm a little bit troubled by your embracement of what I'll call left woke anti-American propaganda way exaggerating any amount of racism in America. Under your leadership, the NFL has perpetuated the narrative that America's a racist country, including the myth of systemic racism in policing. You've committed hundreds of millions of dollars to, quote, "fight racism in America." You've kind of promoted the Black Lives Matter movement. And, of course, the heads of that movement were Marxist. They're kind of antifamily. I realize it's a diffuse organization, and not everybody believes in that. But nevertheless, the founders believed in that.

The NFL is committed to leveraging the NFL Network with its other media properties to place increased emphasis on raising awareness and promoting education and social justice issues of our fans. That's what you say.

Mr. Goodell, studies show that when you control for crime rates, there is no systemic racism in policing. Mr. Goodell, could you use your opportunity to raise awareness among your fans about the fact that study after study shows that when controlling for variables such as crime rates, there is no significant relationship between a person's race and whether or not they'll be arrested or shot at by police?

Do you think you could use your power to get that out there given what you've done in the past?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, first I make no apologies for fighting racism. We believe strongly that there's no place for racism and hatred in our society.

Mr. GROTHMAN. That's not the point.

Mr. GOODELL. I also—well, I'm just trying to clarify a point that I heard in your question.

The second point to it is, we have an incredibly strong relationship with law enforcement. We are supportive of the work that they do. We understand the difficult job that they have, and the dangerous job they have. But we all want great policing. We want to make sure that the police are properly resourced and properly equipped. But more importantly, our work has been focused on how

do we develop better relationships between the law enforcement and the communities.

And personally, I've gone into some of those communities with law enforcement and done what we call ride-alongs. And in that context, you understand the gap that we have to fill between what law enforcement is faced with, how they do their jobs, and what the community expects from them. And I think more communication, more work to try to improve that relationship is not only going to improve policing, but I think it's going to improve our societies in general and our communities.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Goodell, study after study shows there is not system racism in our police departments. There is narrative out there, for example, who, to this day, mislead the public as to what happened in Ferguson. The Black Lives Matter movement fanned the flames out there even though Barack Obama's own Justice Department found that shooting was justified. And you have kind of piled on with the narrative that we have a fundamental problem.

Will you do what you can to use your mouthpiece given the damage I think you've created in the past to straighten the records—straighten out the record with regard to racism in our police departments?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, with all due respect, I think, again, we've been incredibly supportive of law enforcement, and we'll continue that. So—

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I'll give you another question.

This is on the internet. You never know what you can believe on the internet. I look on the internet, and we see that you're making about \$64 million a year, not as an owner, not as somebody who is taking personal risk, not somebody who has to block or tackle or risk your body. To a certain extent, the NFL is profitable because they shake down cities, tell them you're going to—we're going to leave your city unless you build a big—you know, hundreds of millions of dollars a stadium.

Do you think it's appropriate given the monopoly the NFL has that you have no personal risk, either physical risk or financial risk, in your job, could you comment on that \$64 million salary?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman, I started as an intern nearly 40 years ago in the NFL, and I am very fortunate to have made a career at being at the NFL. It's an organization I'm proud of. I'm happy to have opportunities I've had, and people have mentored me and given me those opportunities. My compensation is something that is determined with discretion from the ownership. They make that determination. I am very fortunate to be here in this job. I'm proud of it. And I wish I could say anything more to you that would make you more comfortable, but those are determinations that are made by the ownership.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Thank you for the questions, Mr. Grothman.

One thing I just wanted to clarify, the Commissioner said that the difference between releasing the Miami Dolphins report and the Wilkinson investigation is that witnesses in the Miami Dolphins case did not request their identities to remain confidential. That is not correct.

According to page 54 of the Dolphins report, it says witnesses, quote, “specifically asked that their identities remain confidential. A few even seemed to fear potential retaliation for cooperating with our inquiry, and we honored their request,” closed quote.

I’d now like to recognize the gentlewoman from Ohio, Ms. Brown, for her questions.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I appreciate this committee holding this hearing.

Commissioner Goodell, you’ve repeatedly touted that the NFL should be held to a high standard, and I applaud you for that. You have also assured us that when the NFL took over the investigation of the Commanders, it was to, quote, “provide greater public assurance of the integrity and independence of this investigation.” And yet, it’s been reported eight days after the NFL assumed oversight of the Wilkinson investigation, assigned—it signed an agreement with the Commanders—a secret agreement is how some might call it, but the agreement gave Dan Snyder and the Commanders the right to veto the release information or communication shared with the Wilkinson investigation.

So my question, yes or no, Mr. Goodell: Is it true that the Commanders blocked the NFL from turning over 40,000 documents from the internal investigation to this Committee in response to its October 2021 request?

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman—Congresswoman, sorry, this was a legal agreement that allowed the transfer of the—the investigation that was begun under the Washington Commanders’ authority and was transferred to the NFL. I’m not a lawyer, but I fully understand from our people—my understanding is that it did not prevent us from sharing any information.

Ms. BROWN. Just reclaiming my time. Is that a yes or no, Mr. Goodell? I’m sorry.

Mr. GOODELL. The answer to my question it’s neither. I’m trying to bring clarity to the question.

Ms. BROWN. I’m going to respectfully reclaim my time. The NFL—it’s also been reported that the NFL stood by while Mr. Snyder ran a shadow investigation, deploying private investigators to the homes of his accusers in an effort to intimidate them while he offered them hush money to buy their silence.

Mr. Goodell, did you or anyone from the NFL tell Mr. Snyder or his attorneys to stop using private investigators, yes or no, please?

Mr. GOODELL. As soon as we took over the investigation, we made it clear to them that they should not be investigating any of these matters. Second, we asked that the Commanders reach out to current employees, as well as former employees, to encourage them to participate. So any efforts to intimidate witnesses or prevent them from doing it would be inconsistent with that.

Ms. BROWN. What about the subpoenaing of private emails and phone records from former employees about confidential communications with *The Washington Post* regarding the Commanders’ toxic workplace?

Can you tell me about that?

Mr. GOODELL. I’m not sure I understand your question, Congresswoman.

Ms. BROWN. Did you ask for that to cease, or was there any engagement from you to stop that usage?

Mr. GOODELL. For what to cease? I'm sorry.

Ms. BROWN. The subpoenaing of private emails and phone records from former employees about confidential communications with *The Washington Post* regarding the Commanders' toxic workplace?

Mr. GOODELL. I'm not clear on what that is. I'm happy to followup with our staff and our attorneys to make sure we get you an answer, but I'm not familiar with that.

Ms. BROWN. OK. All right.

Well, after hearing some of the questions that have been put forth and your responses, it seems to me that the NFL picked a side in this investigation, which silenced the voices of employees and allowed Mr. Snyder to pedal his own version of the facts. And I think it's been stated here while I, again, applaud the efforts and the steps that you have taken to reverse course, I associate myself with the comments of my colleague, Mr. Ro Khanna, we can and we must do better.

We should not allow the owners to decide what information is made public, and we should not allow them to silence their employees with nondisclosure agreements that conceal workplace misconduct. So it is my hope and my belief that this Committee must act to pass meaningful legislation that will protect the workers in the League and around the country.

And so with all sincerity, I thank you for coming forward and taking the time to answer this Committee's questions, and hope that you will continue to take the steps to lead the Nation as an example of what it takes to have a productive, quality, safe, workplace. Thank you so much.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. [Presiding.] Thank you.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Keller, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Thank you Madam Chair and Ranking Member Comer.

This Committee had a joint roundtable last February, and the subject came up. And my position on this is the same, and that is, there no excuse for abusive behavior or harassment in any work environment. In any instances of such behavior, they should be fully investigated and violators held accountable.

But as I also pointed out in February, this Committee has been tasked with investigating waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars and ensuring government agencies are operating properly. The fact that we are not discussing historically high inflation prompting the highest fed rate hike since 1994, a nationwide gas average topping \$5 a gallon, or the fentanyl crisis exacerbated by disastrous open-border policies is unacceptable.

Instead, we are now conducting congressional oversight over a private organization already undergoing an investigation. Madam Chair, this Committee must refocus efforts on the most pressing issues affecting the American people, not duplicative ongoing efforts to investigate misconduct.

My question, Mr. Goodell, what steps has the NFL taken to promote safe, working environment for its employees?

Mr. GOODELL. We've made a number of steps going back several years. One, and I mentioned some of this, but annual training that's required across all personnel, from clubs to league officials, to employees, including players, owners, commissioners. We've had sexual harassment training also. We continue to do that on an annual basis, which is also required. So we continue to put this front and center. I've had several conversations with our clubs about the importance of maintaining professional workplaces, that it's their responsibility.

So, I think the steps that have been made clearly have had an impact. But again, we're not perfect. But we want to make sure that our employees feel safe, and they have a place where if they have—I should have mentioned one other thing—is mandatory hotlines. We, at the League, have had a mandatory hotline for people to confidentially raise any issues they think are important, and we also have required that of all our 32 clubs. So I think steps to make it easier for people to report, if there are violations or alleged violations, and most importantly, for us to followup responsibility, have been welcomed and needed, and are the important steps that need to be taken to keep our workplace safe and productive.

Mr. KELLER. OK. The Commanders are required to submit semi-annual reporting assessments to the NFL through July 31 of 2023.

What sort of metrics does the team report, and do these metrics provide an accurate picture of the Commanders' workplace culture?

Mr. GOODELL. They actually don't give it to us. It's put in a report. It's actually gathered by an independent firm, Vestry Laight. They go in. They meet with employees. They meet with the executives, as well as HR, and anybody they wish. They have full access. The report that we saw in February that was shared with all of you indicated a substantial transformation of the organization. Many of those that were in the organization said that it's a major change and a positive change, and something where they feel that they're in an organization that they're proud of and they think that the policies that have been implemented by the Commanders and the executives all way up to the ownership are productive and helpful.

Mr. KELLER. So they're doing everything that's been put in place by the NFL to create a culture that would be an acceptable workplace environment?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes.

Mr. KELLER. They're meeting—

Mr. GOODELL. They're clearly—I'm sorry.

Mr. KELLER. They're meeting their goals, I guess is my question, in the things that they've been asked to do?

Mr. GOODELL. I think this work is something that is you never achieve the goal line. I think you have to continue to work on this, but I think the steps that have been taken, the recommendations made by Beth Wilkinson that were implemented by the Commanders, the executives and the ownership have taken this seriously and made significant changes to their organization. There will be more work to do. We all have more work to do.

Mr. KELLER. Yes. But I guess the point is, everything they've been asked to comply with, they've been complying with, as they should—

Mr. GOODELL. That is correct.

Mr. KELLER. That is correct. The Commanders have been fined \$10 million following the initial investigation into the matter last year among other penalties.

If the Commanders have been meeting the required outcomes of what the NFL has put forth—and you say of course there's always training and things that we need to do. But they're made this progress and been doing the things that the other organizations have been doing, quite frankly, why do we need to have you here to today?

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The gentleman may answer the question.

Mr. GOODELL. As I said, Congressman, I was invited. I think I wanted the opportunity to say that we really have made significant changes to the Commanders' organization. They have—and I think it's an important lesson and instructive in the sense of making sure that we have participation of the employees in identifying what the culture is, identifying the efforts and making sure independent people look at that and make recommendations and those recommendations are implemented through organizations so that they can get better.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. KELLER. The NFL's going to continue doing that. And I'm glad they are. I'm glad you're doing those things in the NFL, so people have a safe place to work. I think now the Committee can focus on things they should be focused on to help the American people—

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Johnson from Georgia is recognized. Mr. Johnson from Georgia.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Madam Chair. And I would implore my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to have respect for the chair and to cease and desist conversation when that gavel comes down.

Mr. Goodell, credible, numerous and serious allegations of sexual misconduct have been made against the Washington Commanders and owner Dan Snyder, who also stands accused of maintaining a toxic work environment that victimizes female employees of the organizations. It should be noted that Mr. Snyder turned down an invitation to appear before this Committee, and I thank you for agreeing to appear before us today. And you do so because you understand that Congress has granted the NFL an exception from the antitrust laws, which enables NFL teams to collaborate on TV contracts. And the NFL does not want Congress to tamper with that antitrust exemption, am I correct, Mr. Goodell?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, we do—I'm here because I feel it's our responsibility to do that and—

Mr. JOHNSON. You would never refuse a request by the Committee to come to testify before the Committee because you're con-

cerned about what Congress can do about the NFL's antitrust exemption; isn't that correct?

Mr. GOODELL. If I could, let me just address the first part of the question.

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, I just want to get a yes-or-no answer for that question.

Mr. GOODELL. It's not a yes-or-no answer.

Mr. JOHNSON. It is. It is, Mr. Goodell. Please, cooperate with me now.

Mr. GOODELL. I'm trying to, sir.

Mr. JOHNSON. I'm working with you. Just answer my question, sir. I mean the reason why you come is because you respect our ability to tamper with the NFL's exemption—antitrust exemption, correct?

Mr. GOODELL. I'm here because I believe you should hear our experience with the Washington Commanders as I said. Second, regarding the answer—

Mr. JOHNSON. OK. All right. Well, let me move on.

Mr. GOODELL. I'm trying to address your antitrust exemption. I think the antitrust exemption that was put back in early 1960's has been very good—

Mr. JOHNSON. It has been very profitable for the NFL, and I'm going to reclaim my time.

Mr. GOODELL. OK.

Mr. JOHNSON. The findings of NFL's investigation into allegations of sexual harassment by Dan Snyder and the Commanders organization remains secret, and Mr. Snyder has, himself, has not been held accountable by the NFL. Additionally, the NFL has entered into an agreement with Dan Snyder, which prevents the findings of the internal investigation from coming to light. Every step of the way, the NFL appears to have been part of a cover up that has resulted in credible allegations of the maintenance of a culture of sexual harassment at the Washington Commanders being swept under the rug.

Meanwhile, for all we know, women working for Washington Commanders are still being subjected to a hostile workplace environment while the NFL has stood by Dan Snyder. Statements that the NFL has held Dan Snyder accountable are impossible to verify because of your unwillingness to reveal the findings of the internal investigation. With the antitrust exemption that the NFL enjoys, which has enabled it to be wildly profitable as an enterprise, it is no secret that the influence your company has in the Nation and across the world, Mr. Goodell, is fundamental.

Why not use this as an opportunity to positively influence the public by holding Dan Snyder accountable for his actions?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, we believe we have held him accountable. As we said, we had an independent investigation.

Mr. JOHNSON. In what way have you held him accountable?

Mr. GOODELL. He was fined over \$10 million. He stepped away from the organization now for a year. He's required—

Mr. JOHNSON. So the organization—so the investigation then has been completed if it has resulted in a fine. Why haven't those results been released to the public?

Mr. GOODELL. We released a summary report, which as I stated—

Mr. JOHNSON. Why not the full report?

Mr. GOODELL. Because there is no full written report.

Mr. JOHNSON. Why not?

Mr. GOODELL. We had an oral report.

Mr. JOHNSON. Why has there not been a full written report rendered on this very important issue?

Mr. GOODELL. There was a five-page report that not only talked about our findings in a summary form, it talked about the toxic organization and the facts that we needed to implement new policies and procedures there. We've put those recommendations from the independent investigator, Beth Wilkinson, and they implemented and adopted each of those ten recommendations—

Mr. JOHNSON. A five-page report, Mr. Goodell, is—

Mr. COMER. His time has expired—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired. The gentleman's time has expired.

I will now call upon Mr. Gibbs from Ohio.

You're now recognized, Mr. Gibbs, for five minutes.

Mr. GIBBS. Yes, thank you.

First, before I yield my time, I want to associate myself with the comments made by Ranking Member Comer about I hope we have some hearings in the future with Secretaries, Cabinet Secretaries dealing with our border, dealing with our energy crisis. We've not had a Cabinet Secretary before this Committee this Congress. It would be nice to have that.

And so I want to yield the rest of my time to Congressman Burgess Owens, former NFL football player. I yield my time.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you. Thank you so much for that.

And thank you, Chairwoman Maloney—

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam Chair, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman may ask his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes. Is it proper for a Congressman who or Congressperson who does not serve on a committee but has been waived onto the Committee to participate in the questioning of a witness without any further proceedings?

Chairwoman MALONEY. He's been waived onto the Committee. And, yes, you can have a member on the Committee yield their time to a waived-on committee member.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you. And I yield back.

Mr. OWENS. And, Chairwoman, can I—

Chairwoman MALONEY. Mr. Owens, you're now recognized.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you. Can I also reclaim the time just taken a few minutes from me, please?

Chairwoman MALONEY. Yes, you can.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you so much.

I want to thank again Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, and members of the Committee for holding this hearing and especially for allowing me to participate.

I'd like to thank Commissioner Goodell for coming to the Committee today. It's long been a long dream of mine to ask the com-

missioner some questions. And I'm going to take a little different tack, something I'm very, very concerned about with the NFL.

The term "racism" is thrown around today with alarming casual frequency. For example, according to *Newsweek*, requiring Black individuals to get an ID to vote is racist. According to NBC News, requiring college applicants to include letters of recommendation in their application is racist. And my absolute favorite, a recent *USA Today* headline asking if math is racist.

What's truly racist is this condescending soft bigotry of low expectation that have far too long plagued my community. It was prevalent when I entered the NFL in 1973 when it was understood that certain positions were reserved for Whites only. Positions of leadership and intelligence, like quarterback, center, middle linebacker, free safety, and head coaches, were considered off limits to Black Americans.

Doug Williams finally broke the White quarterback barrier in 1988 as the NFL's first Black quarterback to both start and win a Super Bowl championship.

Yet, Commissioner, decades later, despite all this progress on and off the field, we're once again forced to discuss under your watch the NFL's engagement in racism behind the scenes.

In June 2021, the NFL was forced to announce it was ending its practice of race-norming when paying out compensation to players experiencing brain damage due to concussions on the field. The NFL has for years used separate tests based on race to score players' cognitive threshold. The test taken by Black players was different than that by White players. The result determined if financial compensation was warranted.

Doctors were required to use race-based norms that assumed Black players were inherently less intelligent than their White teammates. If this sounds like a throwback to the Jim Crow laws of the Deep South, that's because it is.

This practice came to an end only after lawsuits against the league by two former Black NFL players who were accidentally given the cognitive tests normally reserved for White players. When they both qualified for compensation, the NFL demanded that they be tested again. This time, when the clinician applied the race-norming algorithm recommended by the NFL program manual, they were denied compensation.

As a result of this practice, the NFL compensated injured Black players and their families less than White players and their families. To say that Black players should be judged by a lower standard of brain function than their White teammates is without question a perfect example of real racism.

Commissioner, due to the time I have to ask you a couple of questions, just want some yes or noes if you wouldn't mind.

Do you acknowledge that, until 2021, the race-norming algorithm was used to evaluate intelligence of Black players as part of the NFL class action settlement?

Mr. GOODELL. Was it a specific time that you're asking about? But this, as you know, I think this was—this is an issue that was part of a settlement with our former players. A Federal judge oversaw it. Race-norming is not just used in the NFL.

Mr. OWENS. But, Commissioner, if you wouldn't mind, yes, this was back in the 2013 settlement. Did you recognize the race-norming algorithm was part of that settlement? You commented on that, and I know the NFL's apologized for that.

Mr. GOODELL. Yes. The Federal—yes, the two parties agreed to that because it was a standard medical procedure.

Mr. OWENS. All right. So—

Mr. GOODELL. What we agreed to do just recently is—

Mr. OWENS. Reclaiming my time. I'd like to reclaim my time.

Mr. GOODELL. Sure.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you so much.

Do you agree that the NFL's use of a scale for Black Americans versus those of any other race is the definition of systemic racism? Real simple, yes or no?

Mr. GOODELL. It was not required by any doctor to use those standards, and we have adopted new standards approved by the Federal judge.

Mr. COMER. If it was not required, then why was it used? Because in the day there were separate tests used for Blacks and Whites.

Mr. GOODELL. Because that was the method—that's a medical standard far beyond the NFL.

Mr. OWENS. OK. So that being said, I know you apologized for it. The NFL's apologized.

I'll just say—let me just say this real quickly. Speaking on behalf of my Black and White brothers who gave their careers to make sure that we got past racism, this is an atrocity. And the fact the NFL has judged Black people at a different rate in intelligence than White people is something that needs to be looked at.

I look forward to having this conversation with you when we—as we get into the coming months.

And I thank you, and I'll yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

Mr. GOODELL. Congressman—

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlewoman from Michigan, Ms. Tlaib, is now recognized.

Mr. GOODELL. May I—

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you so much.

Mr. GOODELL. May I—

Ms. TLAIB. And I just want to commend my colleague. You know, this is why lived experience is so incredibly important.

As a survivor of sexual harassment in my first job outside of college, I can tell you it is so incredibly important that Congress leads on this issue in making sure that everyone is safe away from discrimination. Again, that can be incredibly traumatic and can last a very long time with people as they move from career to career.

You know, when dozens of women came forward with allegations of attacks at workplace at the Commanders, team owner Dan Snyder stated, and I quote, "I have admittedly been too hands-off as an owner and allowed others to have day-to-day control, to the detriment of our organization."

Commissioner, you were personally briefed on internal investigation into the Commanders, as you know. And sitting here today, do

you believe that Dan Snyder was a hands-off team owner? Was he a hands-off team owner, sir?

Mr. GOODELL. In my judgment—

Ms. TINKER. Yes or no, was he hands-off?

Mr. GOODELL. The owner is responsible for the workplace.

Ms. TLAIB. The Committee has recently obtained evidence that shows exactly how involved Dan Snyder was in fueling the toxic workplace environment. The Committee conducted a deposition of Dave Pauken, who was chief operating officer of the Commanders for a number of years. He worked with Mr. Snyder every single day.

Do you want to know? He said basically—this is what he said to us—that he said, quote, “Both hands on when it came to Mr. Snyder.” So he’s very directly involved.

Mr. Pauken also detailed his role in decisions, big and small. And I’d like to talk about one of those decisions if I may, Commissioner, that I found particularly troubling.

In the fall of 2002, the team hired a new head coach who, according to Mr. Pauken, quote, “groped a member,” “groped a member of the public relations staff at an event.”

According to Mr. Pauken, he consulted with Mr. Snyder about what to do, even though, as he said, quote, “I knew what we were going to do.”

Do you know what that—what he was talking about, Commissioner, here? And, of course, it was nothing. He was going to do nothing. Mr. Pauken said that he, Mr. Snyder, decided, quote, “We weren’t going to confront the new coach.”

Commissioner Goodell, Mr. Pauken participated in a number of interviews with the law firm handling internal investigation. Has NFL looked into these allegations against the former coach?

Mr. GOODELL. Listen, all of those allegations—

Ms. TLAIB. Has he?

Mr. GOODELL [continuing]. Should be treated seriously.

Ms. TLAIB. Has he? You’re working with the firm.

Mr. GOODELL. All—

Ms. TLAIB. Has he, sir?

Mr. GOODELL. All these allegations have been treated very seriously.

Ms. TLAIB. So the allegation of groping a public relations staffer was investigated?

Mr. GOODELL. All I can tell you is we hired an independent investigator to look at the whole thing.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes, got it. I got it. They did the same thing in that previous job I was at. They did the same thing and wrote it off.

Committee staff conducted another deposition, Commissioner, this time of former president of business operations, a CEO, Brian Lafemina. He testified that he raised allegations—

Mr. GOODELL. Lafemina.

Ms. TLAIB. Sorry, sir. I know. Made by Rachel Engleson, a former Commanders employee, about the misconduct of Commanders executive Larry Michael.

Ms. Engleson alleged that Mr. Michael, quote, “would touch her face in an unwanted fashion, talk about her looks in front of large audiences, and kiss her.”

Mr. Lafemina says that he brought these allegations to Mr. Snyder's attention in July 2018. According to Mr. Lafemina, Mr. Snyder's response was, quote, "Larry was a sweetheart, and Larry wouldn't hurt anybody."

Two years later, in July 2020, Mr. Michael resigned from the club after seven—I repeat—seven former employees said he routinely discussed the physical appearance of female colleagues in sexual and disparaging overtones. He even made crude comments about an intern.

Take a listen to what he said, Commissioner, if we can play the audio, please.

[Audio recording played.]

Ms. TLAIB. Unbelievable. So disgusting.

Mr. Snyder wasn't hands-off. He simply turned a blind eye to the conduct he didn't want us all to see, right? This is all too common in the American workplace.

Commissioner Goodell, is this an acceptable way to run a team?

Mr. GOODELL. That example you just showed me is not acceptable and it's why we went into this investigation.

Ms. TLAIB. Could have been your daughter, sir. It could have—I mean, it literally is disgusting.

Mr. GOODELL. I completely agree with that.

Ms. TLAIB. Would you commit to doing more? I mean, right now you keep saying you did everything possible. You're setting—you have to do more. Yes or no, are you willing to do more?

Mr. GOODELL. Yes, of course I'm willing to do more. I never said that we are actually going to stop. I actually said the opposite. We will continue to—

Ms. TLAIB. But you had a report that recommended Dan Snyder be removed as a team owner. You can recommend that Dan Snyder be removed as a team owner.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady's time has expired. The gentleman may answer her question.

Your time has expired.

You may answer her question. Should Dan Snyder be removed?

Mr. GOODELL. I think I answered—

Ms. TLAIB. Remove him. Will you remove him?

Mr. GOODELL. I don't have the authority to remove him, Congresswoman.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The time has expired.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Sessions, is recognized for five minutes. And votes have been called. OK.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Chairman, thank you very much. I appreciate you and Mr. Comer trying to work together.

Commissioner, I want to thank you for taking time to be with us today. I think you've heard that Congress is sometimes assertive about some of the ideas that we have. But I thank you for taking your time to be here, I think answering questions that dealt with someone else's behavior; also your own, because as commissioner you have a responsibility for the league.

I want to thank you for trying to work with people across the spectrum—athletes, coaches, fans, television networks, owners—and to tell that you I think that from my perspective—and I have been a football fan for many, many years. Jerry Jones is a very

close and dear friend of mine. And I've watched Mr. Jones and the Cowboys, as well as almost every other team in the league, to be able to work through athletes' circumstances and things that happen.

I think you've done an outstanding job, and I think that it said volumes to me about the changes that had been made within the Commander organization.

I think that we're all entitled to make mistakes, and I think we're entitled to try and make up for it. I think it says volumes that you as commissioner will lead the effort to have conversations not just with owners, but really the teams that are involved about that which you believe would be in the best interest of the league, because that is really what your job is.

But, Commissioner, I want to say this to you. I think it's also important that we here in Congress recognize we're not perfect either, and we do things that can be seen in ways that are not always the same way everybody in Congress would want.

But I have watched in this town over the last few years about an attack against Dan Snyder, an attack at the former Redskins organization, because of the name that was selected many, many, many years ago and a team and a name that became influential across the country in a positive fashion, positive fashion not just with perhaps African-American athletes but other athletes who chose to come and play here.

But, Mr. Commissioner, I want you to know that this organization here in Congress makes mistakes also, and sometimes those mistakes are letting us get ahead of a professional conversation that we need to have with a conversation that is perhaps political.

And I want to show an article that was in *Politico* that discussed this very directly where it was assumed that this could be fundraising fodder, a reason to get rid of Dan Snyder in this town by Members of this organization, as a matter of fact, not just Members of this organization but chairman of the House Oversight Subcommittee.

And, Mr. Commissioner, I want you to know that I think we'd like to invite you back next year. I think you have a story to tell that is one of significance and one of taking many, many people, diverse backgrounds, people who are, sure, in the entertainment industry, but people who also stand up as heroes to many of our children.

And I think that you've done a great job in taking these men, who by all accounts may not have had the greatest of life. Perhaps they've turned themselves into something better. I could think about Don Perkins. I could think about lots of people with the Dallas Cowboys that I've watched, Calvin Hill, a number of people that have used their position in society as a result of their athletic ability. Their credentialing has helped them in life.

Bill Glass, a personal friend of my family's, became a Christian minister and helped those who were in prison as a result of his direct observations from working in the NFL about diverse people.

So I think that there's a great story to tell, and none of us are perfect.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.
Mr. SESSIONS. But we do represent ideas.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. And I hope that you'll accept our invitation to come back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield back my time and thank the gentlewoman.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady from California, Jackie Speier, is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I apologize for also having the National Defense Authorization Act up in Armed Services.

Commissioner, you announced at the conclusion of a 10-month internal investigation, and despite hundreds of interviews, you insisted that there was no written report. And yet documents obtained by the committee reveal that the NFL agreed to a written report when it took control of the investigation.

I'd like us to put that up on the screen.

In the very first paragraph it says, and I quote, "As part of the investigation, Wilkinson Walsh will complete a written report of its findings."

Is this the agreement you signed, yes or no?

Mr. GOODELL. I have never seen the agreement before, Congressperson, but I know that we signed an engagement letter that was essentially the same engagement letter that was signed by the Washington Commanders.

Ms. SPEIER. All right. So you made the decision to receive an oral rather than a written report. Is that correct?

Mr. GOODELL. We did in October of that year on the basis of—

Ms. SPEIER. OK.

Mr. GOODELL [continuing]. Providing confidentiality to the people who came forward. It was important to—

Ms. SPEIER. But that's bogus because those—reclaiming my time.

The survivors have begged you to release that report. It is the Commanders, it's Dan Snyder that had PIs hired to intimidate them and show up at their doorsteps.

So the question is, did you ever—were you ever aware of a written report or were you ever aware of a PowerPoint presentation, yes or no?

Mr. GOODELL. I am not aware of that. And I want to clarify something you said in respect to the people coming forward. People coming forward, their confidentiality was important to them. Some have come forward and not been concerned about their privacy or confidentiality. But there are many others, the vast majority of the people that were spoken to in the context of this investigation, have wanted to continue their privacy and their confidentiality.

Ms. SPEIER. Will you free Beth Wilkinson—

Mr. GOODELL. So we respected that.

Ms. SPEIER. Will you free Beth Wilkinson to be able to speak freely about the findings from her internal investigation with this Committee?

Mr. GOODELL. As we've said many times before in the context of this, the details and the investigation of Beth Wilkinson are privileged. We're going to protect the—

Ms. SPEIER. We're asking you—

Mr. GOODELL [continuing]. Confidentiality and privacy—

Ms. SPEIER. We're asking you—

Mr. GOODELL [continuing]. Of those people who came forward.

Ms. SPEIER. We're asking you whether or not—OK. Let me ask you this then.

For those victims that would like to have the report released as it relates to them, will you release that?

Mr. GOODELL. We couldn't do that and protect the confidentiality. That's an issue of privilege.

Ms. SPEIER. That's not true. You could—

Mr. GOODELL. Well, Congresswoman—

Ms. SPEIER. No, not if the victims are willing to have that information about themselves released.

Mr. GOODELL. I'm not an attorney, but we can't waive privilege for some that would impact others, I don't believe. But we—I'm happy to have our attorneys be able to address that with you. I'm not an attorney.

Ms. SPEIER. So the Carolina Panthers, there was an investigation of them two years before the Commanders investigation. They included several recommendations for the league to strengthen its protection of workers. One was a specific prohibition to nondisclosure agreements to limit reporting of potential violations.

Did the league ever adopt that recommendation?

Mr. GOODELL. Mary Jo White made four recommendations. I think that's what you're referring to. We've implemented three of the four.

The one we didn't, that we were concerned with, was that all workplace functions—excuse me—violations or allegations had to be reported to our office. We don't think we're situated to be able to handle all that. But, obviously, that's something that the individual clubs are going to have to be able to address their own workplace.

Ms. SPEIER. Would you—

Mr. GOODELL. If there's violation of law or a personal conduct policy, that will be reported to us.

Ms. SPEIER. All right. Reclaiming my time. Reclaiming my time.

Would you put in place a prohibition that nondisclosure agreements cannot be used by the various organizations under the NFL?

Mr. GOODELL. Well, I think this is similar to what the Chairwoman mentioned in your legislation, and we said that we are operating on the basis that nondisclosure agreements cannot prevent a witness from coming forward and sharing the information with us. We understand the legislation—

Ms. SPEIER. I'm just asking what you would do professionally yourself.

Mr. GOODELL. Right now we're—we do not let our employees—excuse me—our employees to use a nondisclosure agreement to not to cooperate with a league investigation.

Ms. SPEIER. So nondisclosure agreements by each of your various teams are not being used? Is that what you're saying?

Mr. GOODELL. No, I'm not saying that.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady's time has expired.

The gentleman may answer her question.

Mr. GOODELL. I'm not saying that. State by state, our teams operate in different states. They have different laws. So the Federal

legislation is something that we're willing to work with the Committee on.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. The gentleman's time has expired.

And before we close, I want to offer the ranking member an opportunity to offer any closing remarks he may have.

Ranking Member Comer, you are now recognized.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

And let me thank Commissioner Goodell for testifying here today. Really appreciate that and the conversation.

And let me summarize what we heard today from two and a half hours of the testimony is that there was a toxic work culture at the Washington Redskins football team. The NFL came in, had independent auditors come in. They identified the problem. Those people were held accountable. They were terminated. And the NFL has ongoing investigations into this. And from what we've heard today, the problems have been fixed and the organization moves on.

We don't believe this was a role of Congress. We don't think this was a good use of congressional time. We don't think that was a good use of taxpayer dollars.

Madam Chair, before I close, I want to let Mr. Goodell know that I will be sending two additional questions for the record, and, obviously, he can't answer because the Committee's over, but just want to publicly say what those questions will be.

No. 1, it's been reported that you retained former U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch to investigate a former minority shareholder for his involvement in manufacturing false allegations about Mr. Snyder. Is that true? That's the first question.

The last question. It has also been reported that, after reviewing Attorney General Lynch's investigation, you permanently banned that minority shareholder from ever owning an NFL team or otherwise participating in business relationships with the NFL. Is that true?

And I think the answers to those two questions might solve some of the uncertainty that still remains about the Washington football team.

With that, Madam Chair, thank you, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

In closing, I want to thank you, Commissioner Goodell, for appearing before us today. We appreciate very much your testimony and your willingness—

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Chair? Madam Chair, this is Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

Chairwoman MALONEY. We are in closing right now and I have to get to the floor to vote. So I have to close right now.

We appreciate your testimony. And as we learned today, the Committee's investigation has uncovered new evidence of troubling conduct at the Washington Commanders' workplace.

And as we heard today, the Commissioner agreed that this conduct was incredibly serious. In fact, he testified that he has, quote, "not seen any workplace in the NFL that is anywhere near what we saw," end quote.

I am happy that Commissioner Goodell recognizes that the NFL has one of the most influential platforms in America and that Mr. Snyder's actions were unacceptable. Unfortunately, Mr. Goodell has not agreed to release the findings from the NFL's internal investigation. Without transparency, we cannot have true accountability.

That is why I announced my intent to issue a subpoena to Daniel Snyder to appear for a deposition next week. We will not be deterred by billionaire owners or political posturing. The victims demand answers, and we all demand justice.

I want to briefly address some questions raised today about the Committee's jurisdiction. To be clear, what I was conveying earlier is that the Oversight Committee has broad investigative authority under House Rule X to investigate any matters within Congress' legislative power.

As I also explained earlier, this Committee has a long bipartisan history of investigating workplace conduct in professional sports, including sexual misconduct.

This investigation has already led to two bills that I introduced to help strengthen protections for workers from workplace misconduct.

I would invite all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting these efforts. The Committee will not waiver in our efforts to conduct this investigation to ensure that women and all Americans are protected in the workplace.

With that, and in closing, I want to thank our panelist again for your remarks. And I want to commend my colleagues for participating in this important conversation.

With that, without objection, all members will have five legislative days within which to submit extraneous materials and to submit additional written questions for the witnesses to the chair, which will be forwarded to the witnesses for response.

I ask our witness to please respond as promptly as possible. Again, thank you for your attendance today.

This hearing is adjourned, and I hope I can make the vote.
[Whereupon, at 1:38 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

