

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today called upon Major League Baseball (MLB) and the MLB Players Association to abandon their decision to end the annual Hall of Fame Game that takes place in Cooperstown, NY.

"The Hall of Fame Game has been bringing together baseball fans from all over the country since 1940," wrote Hinchey in a letter sent today to MLB Commissioner Bud Selig and MLB Players Association Executive Director Donald Fehr. "I urge you to reconsider your decision to end the Hall of Fame Game and take an opportunity to remind America why baseball is so important to our identity."

On January 29, 2008, MLB announced that the final Hall of Fame Game would take place this year, ending a tradition that was started in 1940. The game has had a critical role in the economy of Cooperstown. If no future games occur, many local businesses will be adversely affected. Additionally, local high school students who work at concession stands during the game will be unable to raise funds for their annual school trip to Washington, D.C.

"At a time when the reputation of professional baseball is in jeopardy due to the negative attention surrounding recent scandals, the last thing Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association should be doing is ending a tradition that everyone can rally around." Hinchey wrote in the letter, "Surely, at a time when Major League Baseball is taking in record profits and has the ability to charter private jets for teams, it isn't asking a great deal to keep this important tradition alive."

For more information on efforts to save the Hall of Fame Game please visit www.savethefamegame.com.

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The full text of Hinchey's letter to Selig and Fehr follows:

March 17, 2008

Mr. Allan H. "Bud" Selig, Commissioner

Mr. Donald Fehr, Executive Director

Major League Baseball

Major League Baseball Players Association

245 Park Avenue, 31st Floor

12 East 49th Street, 24th Floor

New York, NY 10167

New York, NY 10017

Dear Commissioner Selig and Mr. Fehr:

I write as a longtime baseball fan and Member of Congress to express my disappointment with Major League Baseball's decision to end the annual Hall of Fame Game held in Cooperstown, New York. The Hall of Fame Game has been bringing together baseball fans from all over the country since 1940. During this game, fans have the opportunity to step back in time and players have the opportunity of standing on the same mound where some of baseball's greats once stood. The Doubleday Field represents the beginning of baseball and is one of the few remaining fields in the country where players have the opportunity to relive history.

For many upstate New Yorkers, this is their opportunity to see a Major League Baseball game without having to travel a far distance. Ending the Hall of Fame Game tradition will deny local baseball fans this opportunity. This would also hurt local businesses in the city of Cooperstown who rely on the influx of tourists who attend the game. In addition, local high school students will miss out on raising charitable funds by running the concession stands at the game. The money pays for their annual senior class trip to Washington, D.C. where they have the opportunity to learn a great deal about our nation's government.

This event is a tradition that has survived for nearly 70 years. At a time when the reputation of professional baseball is in jeopardy due to the negative attention surrounding recent scandals,

the last thing Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association should be doing is ending a tradition that everyone can rally around. Surely, at a time when Major League Baseball is taking in record profits and has the ability to charter private jets for teams, it isn't asking a great deal to keep this important tradition alive. I urge you to reconsider your decision to end the Hall of Fame Game and take an opportunity to remind America why baseball is so important to our identity.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to my request.

Sincerely,

Maurice D. Hinchey