



## NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

February 6, 2019

**ROGER GOODELL**  
*Commissioner*

The Honorable John Bel Edwards  
Governor  
State of Louisiana  
P.O. Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-7015

Dear Governor Edwards:

I received your letter of January 22 yesterday; it apparently arrived at our office after I left for Atlanta.

I fully understand your personal disappointment, and the disappointment and frustration of Saints fans throughout the country, over the outcome of the NFC Championship Game. As you know, immediately following the game, our head of officiating told Coach Payton that a penalty should have been called on the play in question. I have expressed the same view to both Mrs. Benson and Coach Payton, as well as during my press conference on January 30.

Our rules do not permit the Commissioner to overturn the result of a game because of an officiating error, and I believe that it would be wrong for me to do so. Nor have the clubs supported an expansion of replay to review decisions by game officials to call – or not to call – a penalty on the field. That said, I agree that it is incumbent on us to review this issue closely to determine if there are changes in our rules or procedures that would prevent a similar occurrence in the future. While there will always be mistakes in any game played, coached, and officiated by humans, we do not want officiating to be the topic of discussion after any game.

I know that I speak for everyone in the NFL when I say that we treasure our relationship with New Orleans. As you know, last year New Orleans was selected to host the Super Bowl for the 11<sup>th</sup> time – no city has hosted more Super Bowls – and we could not be more excited to return. I look forward to working with you to make the game a great success.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. I hope you will free to call if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Goodell".

ROGER GOODELL