An Open Letter To Congress on Alcohol Ads and College Sports

May 2004

Members of Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives:

We write to you as mentors and advocates for young people and out of a love for and commitment to college sports. We share a common belief that alcohol and college sports do not belong together. Advertising alcoholic beverages during college sports telecasts undermines the best interests of higher education and compromises the efforts of colleges and others to combat epidemic levels of alcohol problems on many campuses today.

For those reasons, we respectfully urge you to cosponsor H.Res. 575, offered by Rep. Tom Osborne, the former Nebraska football coach, and others. The resolution asks that the NCAA and its member institutions voluntarily end alcohol ads on the telecasts of their games. Such action is long overdue.

Sports produces great athletes and develops character, sportsmanship, and integrity among millions of young participants and spectators. College sports at all levels molds men and women athletes who represent the ideal of “a sound mind and sound body.” The use of college sports to market beer to millions of college students and other underage fans distorts the best values of college sports.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue of great importance to young people.

Sincerely,

Dean E. Smith
John Wooden
Rene Portland
Joseph V. Paterno
Grant Teaff
James A. Calhoun
Andy Geiger