August 4, 2008

President James F. Barker
Clemson University
201 Sikes Hall
Clemson, SC 29634

Dear President Barker:

We, the undersigned NCAA Division I college presidents, write to you in your capacity as chair of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors to express our concern about the contradictory practice of beer advertising during college sports telecasts. We respectfully request that the issue of beer advertising during televised NCAA sporting events once again be considered by the NCAA’s Division I Board of Directors at its upcoming meeting.

The most recent discussion of the issue occurred in 2005. It resulted in no change in NCAA policy. Instead, the Board decided that individual colleges could modify their own advertising policies. Many administrators have changed their policies, but continue to express a desire for change at the NCAA level. Beer advertising during college games continues to undermine the many positive attributes of collegiate sports and taints the NCAA’s status as an inspirational youth brand.

Alcohol-related problems on college campuses continue with alarming regularity. Alcohol problems often convene prominently in college sports — particularly football and basketball. It is no surprise that those sports have become important venues for marketing beer. Given the persistent problems caused by underage and excessive drinking by college students, much of it in the form of beer, profiting from beer promotion does not coincide with the best interests of higher education, sports, or student welfare.

The NCAA’s advertising and promotional standards claim to “exclude those advertisements and advertisers…that do not appear to be in the best interests of higher education and student-athletes,” yet allow ads for beverages with alcohol content of 6% or less. Yet, the NCAA prohibits on-site alcohol advertising during its events and forbids the sale of alcoholic beverages. It encourages its members to do likewise. Many members also ban alcohol ads and have implemented tailgating policies to discourage binge drinking and reduce alcohol-induced, unruly fan behavior. Advertising beer to a large number of collegians in the TV audience, many of them underage, is not congruent with the intent of those policies.

We believe that the NCAA’s alcohol advertising policy must again be reviewed. We strongly urge you to take action to end all alcohol advertising – including beer advertising – on NCAA sports telecasts. We believe that this could be done gradually and relatively
painlessly, perhaps over a three-year period. We look forward to working with you toward that end. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Crow, Arizona State University  
Robert L. Potts, Arkansas State University—Jonesboro  
John M. Lilley, Baylor University  
Cecil O. Samuelson, Brigham Young University  
Ruth J. Simmons, Brown University  
Bobby Fong, Butler University  
F. King Alexander, California State University, Long Beach  
Jerry M. Wallace, Campbell University  
Jairy C. Hunter, Jr., Charleston Southern University  
Michael Schwartz, Cleveland State University  
P. George Benson, College of Charleston  
David J. Skorton, Cornell University  
David Maxwell, Drake University  
Paul E. Stanton, Jr., East Tennessee State University  
J. Michael Adams, Fairleigh Dickinson University  
Carl V. Patton, Georgia State University  
Arthur C. Vailas, Idaho State University  
William A. Meehan, Jacksonville State University  
Michael J. McGinniss, F.S.C., LaSalle University  
Alice P. Gast, Lehigh University  
David Hodge, Miami University (Ohio)  
Lou Anna Simon, Michigan State University  
Earl S. Richardson, Morgan State University  
Thomas H. Powell, Mount St. Mary’s University  
Carolyn W. Meyers, Norfolk State University  
Joseph A. Chapman, North Dakota State University  
George C. Wright, Prairie View A&M University  
S.M. Tilghman, Princeton University  
Richard L. McCormick, Rutgers University  
Anthony J. Cernera, Sacred Heart University  
Timothy R. Lannon, S.J., Saint Joseph's University  
Andrew Westmoreland, Samford University  
Paul Locatelli, S.J., Santa Clara University  
Michael Benson, Southern Utah University  
John L. Hennessy, Stanford University  
Baker Pattillo, Stephen F. Austin State University  
Shirley Stum Kenny, Stony Brook University  
Nancy Cantor, Syracuse University  
Ann Weaver Hart, Temple University  
Melvin N. Johnson, Tennessee State University  
Denise M. Trauth, Texas State University—San Marcos  
John Hitt, University of Central Florida
Stephen G. Jennings, University of Evansville
Renu Khator, University of Houston
Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, University of Maryland Baltimore County
George M. Dennison, University of Montana
Milton Glick, University of Nevada
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Mark W. Huddleston, University of New Hampshire
Amy Gutmann, University of Pennsylvania
Robert L. Carothers, University of Rhode Island
Roger G. Brown, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
James D. Spaniolo, University of Texas at Arlington
Donald V. DeRosa, University of the Pacific
Michael Young, University of Utah
Daniel Mark Fogel, University of Vermont
Stan L. Albrecht, Utah State University
Rev. Peter M. Donohue, OSA, Villanova University
Alvin Goldfarb, Western Illinois University
John M. Dunn, Western Michigan University

cc: Myles Brand, NCAA President
    Michael F. Adams, Chair, NCAA Executive Committee