

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 889

By Lundberg

A RESOLUTION to urge Major League Baseball to maintain affiliation with all Minor League Baseball teams in the 2020 Professional Baseball Agreement.

WHEREAS, for more than 100 years, Minor League Baseball teams have promoted America's pastime in communities throughout the nation while working with Major League Baseball to coordinate talent development and ensure a high quality of play at all levels; and

WHEREAS, the Professional Baseball Agreement, the document that governs the relationship between Major League Baseball and the various levels of Minor League Baseball teams, expires in 2020; and

WHEREAS, as part of a renegotiated Professional Baseball Agreement, Major League Baseball has proposed severing ties with forty-two minor league teams, most of which are at the Rookie and Class A Short Season levels, including the Elizabethton Twins, Greeneville Reds, Johnson City Cardinals, Kingsport Mets, Chattanooga Lookouts, and Jackson Generals in Tennessee and the Bluefield Blue Jays, Bristol Pirates, and Danville Braves in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the proposed change would have severe consequences for the Pioneer League, the Appalachian League, and the New York-Penn League, among others, and essentially consolidate the affiliated minor leagues into only four levels; and

WHEREAS, eliminating the Major League Baseball ties for these teams would place a higher financial burden on the teams themselves and potentially result in their closure, which would have an adverse impact on players, fans, and their communities; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing affordable entertainment in markets where attending major league games may not be possible, minor league teams employ thousands of individuals,

help strengthen local businesses through valuable partnerships, and support charitable organizations; and

WHEREAS, the contraction of minor league teams would undermine the overall health of the sport by damaging fan loyalty and limiting opportunities for talented athletes in lower-level leagues to achieve success as professionals; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we urge Major League Baseball to maintain affiliation with all current Minor League Baseball teams in the 2020 Professional Baseball Agreement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be prepared and transmitted to Rob Manfred, commissioner of Major League Baseball.