



# media information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Save Our Friday Nights Update

**EAST LANSING, Mich. – June 7** – Efforts by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and other allied organizations around the country are significantly raising awareness of the public and major college football conferences to save Friday nights for the playing of high school sports following a recent ruling by the National Collegiate Athletic Association to let its member schools play and televise football games on Fridays.

To date, six major Division I-A conferences -- Atlantic Coast, Southeastern, Big 10, Big 12, Pac-10 and Big East -- say their conference members will voluntarily comply by not playing football games on Friday nights.

There has also been discussion about how the committee action of the NCAA can be overturned by its members. In order for the NCAA to rescind its previous action to allow Friday night games, 100 Division I members must request that change be made, and then a vote can be taken of all Division I schools. However, all written requests to call for an override vote must be received by the NCAA by June 25.

“Time is of the essence,” said MHSAA Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts. “It is important that our member schools and the general public, if they want to keep Friday night recognizable as the night for high school sporting events, to contact the presidents at the Division I-A colleges here in Michigan, and ask them to request an override vote by the NCAA.” (Note – A list of the NCAA Division I-A college presidents from the state of Michigan, and their mailing addresses, appear at the end of this release)

Roberts also rebuffed those who are calling the actions of the MHSAA, the National Federation of State High School Associations, other state high school athletic associations, coaches associations and high schools around the country an overreaction.

“For the time being, the big players on the block have decided that it is not in their best interests to play college football games on Friday nights, and we applaud their wisdom,” Roberts said. “But when voluntarily compliance meets money, money always seems to win, and the fear of this whole thing going down a slippery-slope, where eventually the possibility of two Top 25 teams playing on Friday materializes, is still very real.

(more)

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“We need more than voluntarily compliance. We need to put the presidents of the NCAA member schools to put this horse back into the barn, and override the committee action taken earlier this spring.”

Roberts also added that while a game involving two teams from a mid-major conference may not have an impact across the country on a given Friday night, the local impact should not be minimized.

“The gate at high school games in the immediate area where a Friday night game would be played would definitely suffer,” Roberts said. “The idea of college football games on Friday nights stands to hurt high schools financially, and strain relations between colleges and their pipeline for athletes and general students. Again, the effect on the gate of our March tournaments by the NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball tournament is very real, and it only goes to reason that college football games on Friday nights will have a negative impact of the gate at local high school contests.”

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,300 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments, which attract approximately 1.6 million spectators each year.

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**MEDIA ADVISORY** – Here are the names and addresses for the NCAA Division I-A college presidents in the state of Michigan:

Central Michigan University -- Mike Rao -- Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859

Eastern Michigan University – Samuel Kirkpatrick -- Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Michigan State University -- M. Peter McPherson – East Lansing, MI 48824

University of Michigan -- Lee C. Bollinger – Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2201

Western Michigan University -- Elson S. Floyd – Kalamazoo, MI 49008

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