November 6, 2017

Robert Manfred, Commissioner
Major League Baseball
245 Park Ave
New York, New York 10167-0002

Commissioner Manfred,

As you know from the Japanese American Citizens League’s previous statements, we are disgusted by the display of racism by Houston Astros first baseman Yuli Gurriel. We appreciate that you have affirmed that this was your reaction as well. We remain deeply disappointed however, that the punishment for what nearly everyone agrees is an inexcusable display of racism was postponed until after the completion of the World Series. MLB made a values judgement that the World Series is more important than making a statement against racism.

Other sports have suspended players during the finals as the NBA did last year. In fact, during the NLCS, Cubs manager Joe Maddon was ejected from a game by the umpire. Baseball has long maintained that gambling is a threat to the integrity of the game so as to warrant a lifetime suspension. For many Asian Americans, the integrity of the game has been damaged through the values choice that MLB has made this week.

We have been using this event as a teaching opportunity in our communities. As noted in our previous statements, we expect to continue to engage in dialogue with you, the team ownership, and players, so that MLB might come to fully understand the impact this has upon our community, especially our children.

We would like to take this opportunity to share with you the Japanese American experience of racism and discrimination and invite you to return to Los Angeles, site of the decisive game seven of this year’s World Series, to tour the Japanese American National Museum and the surrounding Little Tokyo neighborhood.

Baseball has played such an important role in the Japanese American experience, and that is what has made this incident especially poignant. We hope you will accept our invitation to share our story with you. Please contact David Inoue, Executive Director, at 202-223-1240 to coordinate a meeting.

Sincerely,

Gary Mayeda
National President

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is the nation’s oldest and largest Asian American civil and human rights organization. Visit the JACL website for information or to join the organization: www.jacl.org