

INTRO 2-5

ECLEG JAN24'12 10:10:20

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED
BY LEGISLATOR GRANT**

RE: Requesting that the FCC Change its Outdated Rules on NFL Blackouts that are Unfair to Buffalo Bills Fans

WHEREAS, for 36 years, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has enforced a blackout rule that disproportionately harms the fans of teams like the Buffalo Bills; and

WHEREAS, Ralph Wilson Stadium in Orchard Park has more than 73,000 seats – and the National Football League’s average for attendance last season was 67,000; and

WHEREAS, the far greater number of tickets the Buffalo Bills must sell in order to sell out 72 hours before a game, thereby ensuring local broadcast of that game, is far more challenging to our NFL franchise than most other NFL franchises, given the smaller seating capacity of their stadiums relative to the size of Ralph Wilson Stadium; and

WHEREAS, this archaic rule has not kept up with advances in technology and changes in economics whereby the NFL teams realize more of their revenues from television and merchandizing revenues than from ticket sales; and

WHEREAS, the blackout rule reduces the number of Buffalo Bills game viewing parties in the community – particularly in the homes of Bills fans – and reduces the positive economic impact of increased sales of food, beverage and party supplies that retailers experience when a Buffalo Bills game is televised locally; and

WHEREAS, that suppressed economic activity has a negative impact on the sales tax revenues that accrue to county government to do such things as maintain Ralph Wilson Stadium, which is required by the current lease between Erie County and the Buffalo Bills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this Honorable Body convey its strong support for the abolition of the NFL Blackout Rule; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature encourage local viewership of Buffalo Bills games and the increased economic activity that ensues from this viewership in thousands of households in Erie County; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be conveyed to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary of the Federal Communications Commission, Office of the Secretary, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, D.C. 20554, and County Executive Mark Poloncarz.

FISCAL IMPACT: Positive for the economy in Erie County.