



PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

501 FRONT ST.
NORFOLK, VA 23510
757-622-PETA
757-622-0457 (FAX)

PETA.org
Info@peta.org

July 23, 2007

Gene Upshaw, Executive Director
National Football League Players Association

Dear Mr. Upshaw:

I am writing on behalf of PETA's more than 1.6 million members and supporters and the countless outraged individuals whose calls and e-mails are flooding our office to ask that the NFLPA not stand in the way of any efforts by the NFL or Atlanta Falcons to suspend Michael Vick.

If reports indicating that the NFLPA is blocking Vick's suspension are accurate, you are showing a lack of foresight by defending one player at the expense of all the other players. The Vick indictment is a black eye on the NFL, and the longer that the NFL waits to suspend Vick, the worse that all NFL players look by association.

As you know, the 18-page indictment against Vick details a well-planned, professional-level underground dogfighting enterprise responsible for the suffering and painful death of innumerable animals in several states. Although the exact level of Vick's involvement remains to be seen, the facts are in: Vick is co-owner of a pit bull breeding ring, animals fought and died on his property, and dead animals were unearthed there—this information alone is more than enough for the NFLPA to allow Vick's suspension. If a child prostitution ring were discovered on the property of someone who played for the NFL, would the NFLPA defend him?

At PETA, we have seen firsthand the suffering of dogs who have been forced to fight—mangled, bloody, soaked in urine and saliva, unable to walk, barely able to stand, and covered with cuts, bruises, and scars. Dogs used for fighting suffer tissue damage, severe bruising, and deep, knifelike cuts from their opponents' attacks. The "losers" of these disgusting fights—or as alleged in this case, those who are not "game" enough to keep around—are often killed by their handlers. Our office has tackled cases in which, after losing a fight, dogs were tortured, set on fire, thrown down garbage chutes, starved, beaten, shot, or just left to suffer and die of fatal injuries inflicted by their opponents.

Whether Vick personally doused dogs in water and electrocuted them, hanged them, beat them, drowned them, shot them, slammed them against the ground, and forced them to fight to the death is a question that will be determined in a court of law, but Vick forever will be associated with cruelty to animals—and so will the NFL players you represent, unless the NFL acts swiftly.

Sincerely,

Bruce Friedrich, Vice President

AN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATION DEDICATED
TO PROTECTING
THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS