

Monday Courthouse Remarks – Alfredo Ortiz

Good afternoon. My name is Alfredo Ortiz, and I am the president and CEO of the Job Creators Network, the nation's leading conservative small business advocacy organization. JCN advocates for America's 30 million small business owners and the tens of millions of people who depend on them.

Major League Baseball catered to activist lies about Georgia's voting law and in an act of virtue signaling callously retaliated by moving the All-Star Game from Atlanta to Denver. This move deprived local small businesses, which are the backbone of Atlanta's communities, over \$100 million in lost revenues at a time when they needed it most. The MLB must be held accountable for their knee-jerk decision that hurt so many people.

It's important to understand that JCN lost this motion on standing; MLB didn't win it on the merits. No matter how one judge rules, the fact that what MLB did was wrong doesn't change. Our case had strong support from the likes of Former Attorney Gen. Edwin Meese, The American Constitutional Rights Union, Rep. Vernon Jones, Congressman Barry Loudermilk, whose district hosts Truist Park, Former Senators David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler and the Georgia State House and Senate Majority Caucuses.

Sadly, the current Georgia Senators, Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff, are shamelessly silent even though their constituents have been negatively impacted.

Some in the press and even the courts have said that the MLB pulling the All-Star Game from Atlanta to Denver is a zero-sum game since the game is still being played somewhere just not in Atlanta. But it is not. In fact, this is no game at all. The real hopes and dreams of the people in Georgia were shattered the day Major League Baseball decided to pull the game from them.

Tell Darrell Anderson, the black owner of a limousine business in Atlanta, who's spoken of the consequences of losing the All Star Game for his community, that this is a zero sum game.

Or tell Chris Florence, owner of Atlanta Fastpitch Company, who scheduled an entire annual competition surrounding the All-Star Game and is suffering hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost revenue because of this decision, that it is a zero-sum game.

Or tell Sandra Cook, owner of Catered Southern Events, who explains how losing the All-Star Game is a "big blow," that this is a zero-sum game.

Many of these Atlanta small businesses were preparing for 21 months and counting on this economic infusion to help overcome the historic losses associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. MLB's decision deprives them of the opportunity to jump-start their post-pandemic recovery.

MLB's decision to move the All-Star game from Atlanta to Denver was based on President Joe Biden and activist Stacey Abrams' lies that Georgia's voting law is worse than Jim Crow. This is an insult all citizens of Georgia. The truth is that this law expands access to the ballot box, while also taking common-sense steps to protect voting integrity. Georgia's law makes it easy to vote but hard to cheat. Now, hypocritically Stacey Abrams supports federal legislation spearheaded by Sen. Joe Manchin that mirrors many of the same elements in the Georgia law that were found so offensive, including a voter ID requirement.

By moving the All-Star Game from Atlanta to Denver, the MLB has punished a city with one of the highest black populations in the country and rewarded a city with one of the lowest. And the repercussions of the MLB decision may echo well into the future. Already, Will Smith's latest movie project has pulled filming from the state, depriving local small businesses of additional economic opportunities.

MLB's decision to punish these Atlanta small businesses and residents who bear no responsibility for their state's political action was wrong -- no matter what one judge says. The Job Creators Network will continue fighting tirelessly to make it right.

In the meantime, we have decided to withdraw our lawsuit against Major League Baseball. But I'm here today to promise Atlanta-area small businesses that we will continue to find ways to remedy the injustice inflicted upon them. While we are withdrawing our case from federal court here in New York, we will continue to evaluate our legal options and other out of court opportunities. We will have more information to announce in the coming days.

Thank you. And now I will take any questions you might have.