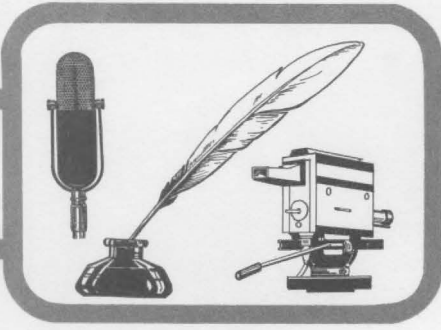


The original documents are located in Box D9, folder “Ford Press Releases - Trusts, Mergers, etc., 1966” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Re: Football



CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

FOR RELEASE IN TUESDAY P.M.'s,
Sept. 13, 1966

WASHINGTON--House Republican Leader Gerald R. Ford, R-Mich., today introduced legislation which would permit the two professional football leagues to combine but would protect high school football by restricting the televising of "pro" games on Friday nights and Saturdays.

Ford said merger of the National and American pro football leagues would "improve competition on the field and assure more and better football games for millions of fans across the country."

High school games would be fully protected under his bill, Ford said. He noted that the legislation would bar televising of pro contests on any Friday night after 6. Pro football also would be blacked out on Saturdays after the second Friday in September, and ending on the second Saturday in December, from any TV station within 75 miles of a regularly scheduled interscholastic or intercollegiate football game.

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Pro football's plan to merge the two leagues is "beclouded by confusion and uncertainty under our antitrust laws," Ford said. He said the antitrust statutes are "inappropriate for professional team sports where teams must get together in leagues and develop coordinated practices."

Ford noted that the Senate last year passed "an excellent and comprehensive" bill to meet this problem but the House has failed to act. There no longer is time during this session of Congress for the House to take up so far-reaching a measure, he said.

Ford said his bill would simply permit the merger of the two leagues to proceed and would leave the larger issues for later consideration. He said the merger plan "might well flounder" in the absence of such legislation.

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