

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 21, 2026

Commissioner Roger Goodell
345 Park Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10154

Dear Commissioner Goodell:

I write with concern regarding the recent medical situation involving Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts, who was diagnosed with a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and bilateral pulmonary emboli (PE). I am grateful to hear his team expects a full recovery, and I wish him a healthy and speedy comeback. However, I write to better understand the circumstances that led to Mr. Hurts' outcome, as unique risk factors may predispose football players to blood clots. In recent years, several star professional athletes have struggled with sometimes career-ending blood clot symptoms. Given the prevalence of blood clots and the risk factors athletes face, the public must understand how the National Football League (NFL) and its teams treat and manage this disorder. I welcome the opportunity to support the NFL in improving its DVT/PE protocols.

This is deeply personal to me. My late husband and the love of my life, Charles Rochester, tore his Achilles tendon playing a game of pickup basketball before a business meeting. Blood clots traveled to his heart and lungs and, at the age of 52, he died. The grief and pain that followed his passing were almost unbearable, and I would not wish it on anybody. Since coming to Congress, I have used my voice to raise awareness of and implement policies to combat issues such as DVT/PE. This includes the *Charles Rochester Blood Clot Prevention and Treatment Act* and the "[Blood Clot Awareness, Action, and Advocacy: The Toolkit](#)".¹

As I understand it, Jalen Hurts was cleated in the calf during the Eagles' Week 4 loss to the Rams. After flying to London for a game against the Jaguars, an ultrasound found a superficial blood clot in his calf. Conflicting reports suggest Mr. Hurts was hospitalized and advised to stay awake until kickoff as a safety precaution.² He played, but a follow-up ultrasound days later found the clot had moved. Further testing ultimately revealed the clot had spread to both of his lungs.

DVT/PE is a significant public health concern facing hundreds of thousands of Americans each year, and today, almost 100,000 Americans die from this preventable disease each year.³ Athletes face multiple risk factors for DVT and PE, like traveling long distances, dehydration, trauma, and bone fractures, warranting heightened vigilance.⁴

¹ <https://www.bluntrochester.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Blood-Clot-Awareness-Action-and-Advocacy-Toolkit.pdf>

² <https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/eagles/2026/10/19/jalen-hurts-blood-clot-diagnosis-no-sleep/92330379007/>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/blood-clots/toolkit/impact-of-blood-clots.html>

⁴ <https://www.stoptheclot.org/about-clots/athletes-and-blood-clots/>

I am writing because this incident raises important questions about how the NFL protects the well-being of its players. To help the public understand how these decisions are made, I respectfully ask that the League respond to the following:

1. Does the NFL have a league-wide protocol for the detection, prevention, and treatment of DVT and PE? Which medical guidelines were consulted in developing this protocol?
2. What standards and processes govern a player's clearance to participate when a clot is suspected or diagnosed? Does the NFL have a league-wide Return-To-Participation Protocol?
3. What education is provided to players, athletic trainers, and coaches on how to identify the signs and symptoms of DVT and PE?
4. What specific measures has the League put in place to reduce blood clot risk, including, but not limited to, those associated with long flights?
5. Will the League conduct a thorough review of the Eagles' handling of this specific situation, including who cleared Mr. Hurts to play after staying awake overnight, and cleared subsequent air travel on a transatlantic flight back to the U.S. from London? If so, what is the timeline?

I am deeply relieved that Mr. Hurts's story did not end the way my husband's did. Blood clots affect more than 900,000 people in the United States each year,⁵ and the NFL's influence and reach offer a vital opportunity to turn this tragedy into a force for preventing lost lives both in sports and outside of it.

I'd welcome a briefing for my office and members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP). Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/blood-clots/toolkit/impact-of-blood-clots.html>