

1 A RESOLUTION urging Major League Baseball to rescind the ill-advised proposal
2 that threatens the future of the Lexington Legends and professional baseball in Central
3 Kentucky.

4 WHEREAS, The history of professional baseball in Kentucky dates back to July 19,
5 1865. The Louisville Grays hosted the first baseball game played under standard rules
6 west of the Alleghenies, where they defeated the Nashville Cumberlands. When
7 Louisville businessman Walter Haldeman and others formed the National League in
8 1876, this Louisville club was a charter member. Kentucky has not been represented by a
9 major league team since the turn of the 20th century when the Louisville Colonels
10 switched to the minor league, but minor league baseball has flourished in the state. More
11 than 200 Kentucky natives have played major league baseball and four Kentuckians have
12 been elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame: Earl Combs, A.B. "Happy" Chandler, Jim
13 Bunning, and Harold "Pee Wee" Reese. Today, Kentucky hosts three Minor League
14 Baseball teams: Louisville Bats in Louisville, Lexington Legends in Lexington, and the
15 Bowling Green Hot Rods; and

16 WHEREAS, Kentucky's three Minor League Baseball teams, and others in
17 surrounding states nearby, add to the quality of life for many people in Kentucky by
18 providing access to live action, affordable family entertainment throughout the spring and
19 summer months; and

20 WHEREAS, The Lexington Legends are an engine of tourism, welcoming over
21 270,000 fans to their games in 2019 and hosting the KHSAA State Baseball Tournament
22 at their ballpark. The Lexington Legends have, during the 20 years of their existence,
23 attracted thousands of visitors to Central Kentucky -- visitors from every state in the
24 nation and from several other countries, many of whom might otherwise never have
25 visited our Commonwealth; and

26 WHEREAS, These first-time and repeat visitors to Central Kentucky include
27 players and coaches, their families and friends, umpires and professional scouts, baseball

1 professionals and avid fans of the game, and they stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants,
2 shop in our stores, visit our attractions, and discover our state in ways they otherwise
3 would never experience; and

4 WHEREAS, Minor League Baseball teams in Kentucky are small businesses that
5 provide paychecks to dozens of full-time and hundreds of part-time employees in our
6 state, form partnerships with hundreds of other Kentucky businesses, generate millions of
7 dollars in economic impact and assist Kentucky charities and community organizations in
8 raising several hundred thousand dollars every year; and

9 WHEREAS, A proposal from Major League Baseball seeks to eliminate 42 teams,
10 including our Lexington Legends, from its player development structure with Minor
11 League Baseball and, if implemented, would jeopardize the future of professional
12 baseball throughout Central Kentucky and in other nearby communities in neighboring
13 states;

14 NOW, THEREFORE,

15 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
16 *Kentucky:*

17 ➔Section 1. The Kentucky Legislature hereby urges Major League Baseball to
18 rescind the ill-advised proposal that threatens the future of professional baseball in
19 Central Kentucky and the benefits in tourism, job creation, quality of life, and charitable
20 assistance that our citizens and communities now enjoy because of Minor League
21 Baseball in Central Kentucky.

22 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Kentucky Senate shall forward a copy of this
23 resolution to Rob Manfred, Commissioner of Major League Baseball, 1271 Avenue of the
24 Americas, New York, New York, 10020.