



For Immediate Release

Donald Fehr announces his plans to step down as MLBPA Executive Director

New York, NY, Monday, June 22, 2009 ... Donald Fehr announced today his intention to step down as Executive Director of the Major League Baseball Players Association, a position he has held since December, 1983.

“It has been a high privilege to be entrusted with the leadership of this extraordinary union for the last 25 years, and I am enormously proud of what the players have accomplished during that time,” Fehr said. “But now, about two years before the next round of collective bargaining, is the right time for me to relinquish my position and for the players to name new leadership. Accordingly, I have informed members of the Executive Board that I will resign effective not later than next March 31.”

Fehr said he had discussed his plans with the elected player leadership on the MLBPA Executive Subcommittee over the last few months. Those players, Fehr said, have all told him that they intend to recommend to the Executive Board, and the membership, that Michael Weiner, currently MLBPA General Counsel, be named as his successor.

Weiner, a 1986 graduate of Harvard Law School, has been with the MLBPA since 1988. He has participated in virtually every negotiating session with the Clubs in the last several rounds of bargaining. For more than ten years, he has been the staff counsel with the primary responsibility for administering and enforcing the Basic Agreement. And since he was named General Counsel in 2004, he has been in charge of all legal matters involving the Players Association.

Under the MLBPA Constitution, the Executive Director is appointed by the Executive Board. “I anticipate that the elected members of the Executive Subcommittee will recommend to the full Board that Michael become the next

Executive Director,” Fehr said. “If the full Board agrees, I will urge that this important decision be submitted to a full membership vote.”

“Michael has been at my side during all the battles we have fought over the last 20 years and has been a major part of our successes,” Fehr said. “He is clearly the most qualified person to become the next Executive Director, and carry on the work of the Players Association in the years to come.”

Fehr joined the MLBPA in 1977 as General Counsel, and became Executive Director and General Counsel in December 1983. Over the course of his 32 years with the MLBPA, Fehr has known five Commissioners and sat across the table from nine different chief club labor negotiators. Under his leadership, the players successfully fought through three work stoppages, won the collusion cases of the 1980s, won the bad-faith bargaining case that ended the 1994-95 strike, and fought off the owners’ efforts at reducing the size of the two leagues in 2002. The Basic Agreement announced in 2002 was the first new contract reached without a work stoppage in more than thirty years, and broke a streak of eight consecutive work stoppages in baseball. The 2002 Basic Agreement also dramatically increased revenue sharing in MLB. Then in 2006, the Players Association and the Clubs announced a 5-year extension before the 2002 Basic Agreement expired.

The 2002 Basic Agreement included a new Joint Drug Agreement (JDA) under which random testing for performance enhancing drugs began. The JDA has been amended three times since then, most recently in 2008. Under the JDA, more than nine thousand tests were conducted over the last three years, and only ten players have been suspended for positive steroid tests.

During Fehr’s tenure as Executive Director, both the minimum and average salaries of players have increased tenfold.

“We have had some good times and some difficult times over the years”, Fehr said. “Over all of those years, players remained unified, involved, and absolutely determined to achieve fair agreements. That is what counted. That is what will count in the years to come.”