

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4272

To keep professional sports franchises in their home communities, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 26, 2026

Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. MURPHY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## A BILL

To keep professional sports franchises in their home communities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Home Team Act of  
5 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Professional sports franchises have a signifi-  
9 cant economic and cultural impact on their local  
10 communities.

1           (2) The relocation of a professional sports fran-  
2           chise abandons the home community and fan base of  
3           the franchise that is largely responsible for the  
4           growth and development of the franchise.

5           (3) The use of public funds, through a nego-  
6           tiated relocation or threat to relocate of a profes-  
7           sional sports franchise, to pay for new sports sta-  
8           diums have a substantial and detrimental effect on  
9           State and local governments and their taxpayers.

10          (4) The building of a stadium to secure a fran-  
11          chise in their new community may displace local  
12          residents with little consideration to their needs.

13          (5) Article I, section 8, clause 3 of the Con-  
14          stitution of the United States grants Congress the  
15          power to regulate interstate commerce.

16          (6) Professional sports franchises have a sub-  
17          stantial and direct effect upon interstate commerce  
18          because—

19                (A) professional sports games are broad-  
20                cast on television and streamed around the  
21                country and across the world;

22                (B) visiting teams and fan bases travel  
23                from State to State to compete in or watch  
24                games, purchasing tickets for travel, lodging,  
25                food, and other items; and

(C) American professional sports leagues, recognizing the interstate nature of the revenues generated by the professional sports business, have agreed to revenue sharing models, whereby the revenue generated from a local game is shared amongst all the sports franchises in the league across States and for Canadian sports franchises as well.

**SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP BANS  
AND OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE.**

(a) PROHIBITION.—A league, operating in or affecting interstate commerce, may not, as part of league requirements or agreements—

(1) prohibit ownership of a franchise by a government entity or members of the general public; or

(2) prohibit the transfer of a franchise to a government entity or members of the general public.

(b) OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3), a franchise owner may not move the franchise from their home community, move the franchise across State lines, or eliminate the franchise unless the franchise owner offers an entity specified in paragraph (2) a fair opportunity to purchase such franchise.

1           (2) PRIORITY.—A fair opportunity to purchase  
2           a franchise pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be pro-  
3           vided, in descending priority, to the following enti-  
4           ties:

5                   (A) A local government entity or a home  
6                   community cooperative.

7                   (B) A nonprofit organization that operates  
8                   in the community or a public-private partner-  
9                   ship composed of a local government entity or  
10                  State government entity with a home commu-  
11                  nity cooperative or nonprofit organization  
12                  headquartered in such unit of local government  
13                  or State.

14                  (C) A private person, private consortium,  
15                  or company that resides in the community or  
16                  operates in the community.

17           (3) FAIR OPPORTUNITY.—In carrying out this  
18           subsection, a franchise owner shall—

19                   (A) provide proper notice regarding the  
20                   proposed new location of the franchise or pro-  
21                   posed franchise elimination;

22                   (B) offer the franchise for purchase for  
23                   fair market value; and

24                   (C) accept an offer made by an entity de-  
25                   scribed under paragraph (2) if that offer is the

1 amount that is a fair price as determined under  
2 subsection (c) or more than that amount.

3 (c) APPRAISERS.—

4 (1) APPRAISERS.—The Secretary of the Treas-  
5 ury shall establish a team of professionally trained  
6 appraisers to evaluate a fair price for a franchise.

7 (2) DEDUCTION.—The evaluation of a fair price  
8 undertaken pursuant to paragraph (1) shall deduct  
9 from the appraisal amount the total amount of any  
10 government payment, credit, or subsidy provided for  
11 the construction of any stadium where the franchise  
12 played the majority of their home games.

13 (d) ENFORCEMENT.—

14 (1) CIVIL PENALTY.—The Attorney General  
15 shall assess against a franchise owner in violation of  
16 this section a fine of \$30,000 for each day the owner  
17 is in violation of this section.

18 (2) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—A unit of  
19 local government or a State may bring a civil action  
20 for violation of this section in an appropriate district  
21 court against a franchise owner for injunctive and  
22 monetary relief.

23 (e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act shall be  
25 construed to preempt, diminish, or interfere with the

1 right of employees to collectively bargain over terms  
2 and conditions of employment.

3 (2) EXISTING AGREEMENTS.—Nothing in this  
4 Act shall be construed to preempt, diminish, or  
5 interfere with a collective bargaining agreement that  
6 is in place on the date of the enactment of this Act.

7 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) COMMUNITY.—The term “community”, with  
9 respect to a franchise, means the metropolitan sta-  
10 tistical area, as determined by the Office of Manage-  
11 ment and Budget, in which the franchise plays the  
12 greatest number of regular season home games with-  
13 in its league.

14 (2) CONSORTIUM.—The term “consortium”  
15 means a group of private investors created specifi-  
16 cally for a particular transaction of acquiring a  
17 sports franchise.

18 (3) FRANCHISE.—The term “franchise” means  
19 a member professional sports team of a league.

20 (4) FRANCHISE OWNER.—The term “franchise  
21 owner” means a person who owns a franchise.

22 (5) HOME COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE.—The  
23 term “home community cooperative”, with respect to  
24 a franchise, means an autonomous association of  
25 persons united voluntarily to meet their common

1 economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations  
2 through a jointly owned and democratically con-  
3 trolled enterprise that is based in the community in  
4 which the franchise plays the greatest number of  
5 regular season home games within its league.

6 (6) LEAGUE.—The term “league” includes the  
7 National Football League, the National Basketball  
8 Association, Major League Baseball, the National  
9 Hockey League, Major League Soccer, the Women’s  
10 National Basketball Association, and the National  
11 Women’s Soccer League.

12 (7) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITY.—The term  
13 “local government entity”, with respect to a fran-  
14 chise, means any unit of local government with juris-  
15 diction over land use decisions in the location in  
16 which the franchise plays the greatest number of  
17 regular season home games within its league.

18 (8) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term  
19 “nonprofit organization” means any organization  
20 registered as a public charity by the Internal Rev-  
21 enue Service.

22 (9) PRIVATE COMPANY.—The term “private  
23 company” means a business entity the securities of  
24 which do not trade on public markets.

1           (10) PROPER NOTICE.—The term “proper no-  
 2           tice”, with respect to proposed relocation or elimi-  
 3           nation of a franchise, means notice that is provided  
 4           not later than one year prior to the commencement  
 5           of the season in which the franchise is to play home  
 6           games in the proposed new location or the date of  
 7           franchise elimination to all interested parties, the  
 8           news media, and on all social media platforms of the  
 9           franchise, and includes—

10                   (A) identification of the proposed new  
 11                   home location, if applicable;

12                   (B) a summary of the reasons for the pro-  
 13                   posed relocation or franchise elimination; and

14                   (C) the date on which the proposed reloca-  
 15                   tion or franchise elimination would be effective.

16           (11) SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM.—The term “so-  
 17           cial media platform” means a website or internet  
 18           medium that—

19                   (A) permits a person to become a reg-  
 20                   istered user, establish an account, or create a  
 21                   profile for the purpose of allowing users to cre-  
 22                   ate, share, and view user-generated content  
 23                   through such an account or profile;



1                   (B) enables one or more users to generate  
2                   content that can be viewed by other users of the  
3                   website or medium; and

4                   (C) primarily serves as a medium for users  
5                   to interact with content generated by other  
6                   users of the website or medium.

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