

Exhibit 2
to the
Declaration of Ronald Katz in Further Support of
Plaintiffs' Motion for Class Certification



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Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Report: DeLamielleure targeted by head of NFL's union

ESPN.com news services

A Pro Football Hall of Famer who has been one of Gene Upshaw's strongest critics is unhappy with a threatening remark the executive director of the NFL Players Association made about him last week.

Hall of Fame guard Joe DeLamielleure, one of the leading advocates of retired NFL players who are in need of financial assistance, isn't taking what Upshaw said in last week's Philadelphia Daily News lightly. In the interview, Upshaw defended his record for helping retired players and zeroed in on DeLamielleure, who has previously called for Upshaw's ouster.

"A guy like DeLamielleure says the things he said about me, you think I'm going to invite him to dinner? No. I'm going to break his ... damn neck," Upshaw was quoted as saying by the newspaper.

According to the Daily News, Upshaw also said he told a group of Hall of Famers in 2006: "I'm not one to turn the other cheek. You're not going to hit me in the nose and I'm going to sit there and smile."

DeLamielleure, perhaps best known as O.J. Simpson's lead blocker on the Bills' famed "Electric Company" offensive line in the early 1970s, said Upshaw's comment has frightened his family.



Upshaw

"At first, I was angry. All the competitiveness comes out in you and I thought, 'I'd like to see him try.' But then reality sets in," DeLamielleure said in an interview Monday with the Charlotte Observer.

"My wife was petrified. We grew up in Detroit. You know what unions are. You hear about it. She goes, 'Hey, this guy is a head of a union, a powerful union, and [when] he makes a threat like that, you'd better take it serious.'

"I'm not afraid of Upshaw, but he has the means to do what he said."

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell, in Charlotte Tuesday for a luncheon honoring Panthers owner Jerry Richardson, wouldn't comment directly about Upshaw's remarks, but did come to his defense on retired players.

"Retired players are important to us. They helped us build the game," Goodell said. "I don't think anybody I know has done more for retired players, or players in general, than Gene Upshaw."

"I think it's unfortunate this kind of thing is going on. I think that's the reason Gene and I have talked about forming this alliance where we can address these issues in a responsible fashion. I don't think it's helpful, but I understand it's an emotional issue."

Upshaw, who could not be reached for comment Tuesday, has stressed he works for current players, not retirees. DeLamielleure believes Upshaw intentionally keeps current players uninformed about the plight of ex-players.

"He keeps them in the dark and he keeps his job," DeLamielleure said.

During Super Bowl week in Miami last February, DeLamielleure, Mike Ditka and Jerry Kramer spoke at a news conference announcing the first Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund auction. The event was formed to help Hall of Fame players who have fallen on their luck and are not covered by the NFL Player Association's and NFL's pensions.

"Gene Upshaw and Paul Tagliabue are responsible for this," DeLamielleure said at the time. "They've been in power for 20 years and have done nothing. "If we get this money and don't distribute it, we're as guilty as the other people who have been screwing them [older players] for years."

Interviewed by ESPN at the time for a response, Upshaw -- a Hall of Famer himself who has led the union for 20-plus years -- said \$1.2 million has been distributed in the last year to "players in need." The money has gone to 147 former players; only 12 players were denied a grant, according to Upshaw.

Many believe Upshaw's comments were out of bounds.

"I know people get upset, people get mad," said Panthers safety Mike Minter, who has worked closely with the union and is a strong supporter of Upshaw. "But what you represent, you've got to control your emotions. You can't let that get outside like that."

Minter, an 11-year veteran who spent three years on the union board, contends Upshaw doesn't get credit for increasing salaries and benefits.

"He's done an excellent job," Minter said. "You've got a lot of older guys who are hurting and it seems like we're not taking care of them. But where we started, when the man took the job, to where we are today, it's unbelievable. For anybody to say that this guy is not doing a great job, doesn't know."

Several former NFL players were also taken aback by Upshaw's comments, telling the Observer they shouldn't be taken lightly.

- Hall of Fame linebacker Sam Huff: "You can't say something like that. You're threatening a guy's life."
- Former Cleveland Browns defensive back Bernie Parrish, considered a leader in the anti-union movement among retirees: "[Upshaw's] got a lot of money at stake. I don't trust him not to be violent. I have some concern for my friend Joe DeLamielleure."
- Former Baltimore Colts safety Bruce Laird: "What's amazing is with the way the National Football League has had its problems in 2006 and 2007 and the concern about steroids and active players being

out of line with drugs or guns, [here's] the executive director of active players threatening another Hall of Famer. I think as any player, whether you're active or retired, you really have to sit back and go, 'Do you want this man representing you and the league?' That is the real question."

As head of the players association, Upshaw is not subject to discipline under the NFL's new conduct policy. To remove him as executive director would require the union board to vote to put it before the more than 1,800 union members. That board voted unanimously to give Upshaw a three-year extension in March.

Information from The Associated Press was used in this report.

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