



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

June 5, 2008

The Honorable Thomas M. Menino
Boston City Hall
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

RE: FRIENDLY LAKERS-CELTICS WAGER

Dear Mayor Menino:

Tonight is truly an historic night. It is hard to believe that it has been twenty one – long – years since the last time the Lakers beat the Celtics in the NBA Finals. Tonight we renew this great American tradition.

The only thing harder to believe is that it's been more than two decades since the great Boston Celtics have tasted the sweet victory of an NBA Championship. The year was 1986. Hair was big. Shorts were short. And Michael Dukakis was preparing his historic run for president.

I truly expected our great rivalry of the 1980s to carry into the 1990s – particularly as the Lakers and Celtics continued to assemble a pantheon of NBA legends: Kobe Bryant, Shaquille O'Neal, Derek Fisher, Phil Jackson, Pervis Ellison, Bryant Stith, Vitaly Potapenko and Rick Pitino.

So to commemorate this historic event, I say we scrap the tired tradition of wagering regional trinkets or cuisine – and go big. Let's really put it on the line: jobs, tradition, pride.

So here's my proposal:

If the Celtics win, we'll send you the best professional football team L.A. has to offer: the Arena League's Los Angeles Avengers.

If the Lakers win, we get the Patriots.



Friendly Lakers – Celtics Wager

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I know what you might be thinking: "Villaraigosa must be nuts! Bostonians would make out like bandits in that deal! With an indoor arena team, the fans would not have to risk frostbite to see a mid-September game. And with the smaller field, our coaches wouldn't even need cameras to steal opponents' signals."

I'm sure my constituents might not be happy with this deal, but I am so confident in the Lakers' victory that I am willing to put it all on the line.

Oh, and to sweeten the pot, in the event of a Lakers victory you can keep the Patriots' coach. We have a pretty good guy down the street who might be interested in the job – and who probably still has the gear.

I look forward to your response and a great finals series. My only regret is that I will not be able to visit the Garden for a game. I was hoping to experience first-hand the legendary Bostonian hospitality and sportsmanship.

Good luck and Go Lakers!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antonio R. Villaraigosa', written in a cursive style.

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