



77% OF AMERICAN PUBLIC TELL HOUSTON OWNER TO KEEP AND DEFEND HIS GM

ONLY 9% FEEL DARYL MOREY GM SHOULD BE FIRED

By 46-36% Public Supports Adam Silver's Handling

South Orange NJ, October 25, 2019 -- The American public strongly supports the Houston Rockets general manager's tweet regarding Hong Kong and China's rights conflict. (Daryl Morey, the GM, tweeted support for the Hong Kong protesters seeking freedom from Chinese oversight. The Chinese reacted with disdain and business with the NBA was threatened).

Only 9 percent of the public thought the Rockets GM, Daryl Morey, should be fired, with 77 percent saying the Rockets should keep him and defend his freedom of speech. 14 percent said they did not know or had no opinion.

In addition, 54 percent of the nation feels Daryl Morey should be applauded for taking a stand supporting the Hong Kong protesters, with only 19 percent saying he should not have sent the tweet because it risked valuable relationships over a foreign domestic issue. 27 percent did not know or had no opinion.

These are the findings of a Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted this week among 703 adult Americans across the country on both landlines and cellphones. The Poll has a margin of error of +/-3.8 percent.

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver first apologized for the tweet but later backtracked and showed support for freedom of speech. 46 percent of the public felt he handled it well, and 36 percent say he did not, with 18 percent saying they did not know or had no opinion.

52% SAY LEBRON JAMES COMMENTS WERE OUT OF SELF-INTEREST

LeBron James tweeted condemnation of Morey, claiming "he wasn't educated on the situation" and endangered people "not only financially but physically." Only 28 percent thought his reaction was sincere, with 52 percent saying he acted out of financial self-interest.

69% expressed concern that China has so much influence over an American professional League, with only 23 percent saying they are not concerned.

MOREY'S TWEET VS. KAEPERNICK'S KNEELING

Comparing Morey's tweet to Colin Kaepernick's kneeling during the national anthem, 47 percent said both actions should be defended as free speech, with 16 percent saying that it only applied to Morey and 5 percent saying it only applied to Kaepernick.

There are big differences between Democrats and Republicans on this comparison. 59 percent of Democrats and only 29 percent of Republicans say that they should both be defended as free speech, while 7 percent of Democrats and 21 percent of Republicans say that it only applies to Morey.

"The fundamental right of free speech seems to have carried the day in favor of Daryl Morey's tweet," noted Rick Gentile, director of the Seton Hall Sports Poll, which is sponsored by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business. "It is much clearer when applied to a foreign power than to a domestic one."

ABOUT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous academic programs, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by *The Princeton Review*, *U.S. News & World Report* and *Bloomberg Businessweek*.

Seton Hall embraces students of all religions and prepares them to be exemplary servant leaders and global citizens. In recent years, the University has achieved extraordinary success. Since 2009, it has seen record-breaking undergraduate enrollment growth and an impressive 110-point increase in the average SAT scores of incoming freshmen. In the past decade, Seton Hall students and alumni have received more than 30 Fulbright Scholarships as well as other prestigious academic honors, including Boren Awards, Pickering Fellowships, Udall Scholarships and a Rhodes Scholarship. The University is also proud to be the third most diverse national Catholic university in the nation.

During the past five years, the University has invested more than \$165 million in new campus buildings and renovations. And in 2015, Seton Hall launched a School of Medicine as well as a College of Communication and the Arts. The University's beautiful main campus in suburban South Orange, N.J. is only 14 miles from New York City — offering students a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities. Seton Hall's nationally recognized School of Law is located prominently in downtown Newark. The University's Interprofessional Health Sciences (IHS) campus in Clifton and Nutley, N.J. opened in the summer of 2018. The IHS campus houses the University's College of Nursing, School of Health and Medical Sciences and the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University.

For more information, visit www.shu.edu.

About the poll:

This poll was conducted by telephone October 21-23 among adults in the United States. The Seton Hall Sports Poll is conducted by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard landline and cell phones. The error for subgroups may be higher. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls. The Seton Hall Sports Poll has been conducted regularly since 2006. Recently chosen for inclusion in iPoll by Cornell's Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, its findings have been published everywhere from USA Today, ESPN, The New York Times, Washington Post, AP, and Reuters to Fox News and most points in between.

Media: Media: Marty Appel, AppelPR@gmail.com;
Michael Ricciardelli, Associate Director of Media Relations, Seton Hall
michael.ricciardelli@shu.edu, 908-447-3034

The results:

1. Recently the General Manager of the Houston Rockets sent out a tweet saying: "Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong". The Chinese government expressed outrage putting the NBA's 500 million dollars in annual revenue from China at risk — along with many players endorsement deals valued as high as 10 million per year.

Which of the following statements best reflect your feelings on the issue:

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| 1 - The Rockets' GM shouldn't have sent out the tweet risking valuable financial relationships over a foreign domestic issue | 19% |
| 2 - The Rockets' GM is to be applauded for taking a stand supporting the protesters in Hong Kong | 54 |
| 3 - Don't know/No opinion | 27 |

2. Do you think the owner of the Houston Rockets, which stand to lose up to 25 million dollars per year in revenue earned in China, should fire the GM and apologize to the Chinese government or keep him and defend his freedom of speech?

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|---|----|
| 1 - Fire him and apologize | 9 |
| 2 - Keep him and defend his freedom of speech | 77 |
| 3 - Don't know/No opinion | 14 |

3. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver originally apologized for the tweet, then backtracked and showed support for freedom of speech while regretting any bad feelings that might have been caused. Do you think he handled the situation well or not?

- | | |
|---------------------------|----|
| 1 - Handled it well | 46 |
| 2 - Didn't handle it well | 36 |
| 3 - Don't know/No opinion | 18 |

4. NBA star LeBron James, frequently outspoken in defense of social justice issues, sent out a tweet condemning the Rockets' GM saying "he wasn't educated on the situation" and endangered people "not only financially but physically". Do you think James was being sincere or acting out of financial self-interest?

1 - Sincere	28
2 - Financial self-interest	52
3 - Don't know/No opinion	20

5. Are you concerned that China has so much influence over an American professional league?

1 - Yes	69
2 - No	23
3 - Don't know/No opinion	8

6. It has been argued that the GM's tweet and Colin Kaepernick's kneeling during the national anthem are both examples of freedom of speech. Do you think that they should both be defended as freedom of speech, just the GM's tweet, just Kaepernick's kneeling or neither?

1 - Both	47
2 - GM tweet	16
3 - Kaepernick's kneeling	5
4 - Neither	22
5 - Don't know/No opinion	10

7. Would you describe yourself as a Democrat, Republican, Independent or something else?

1 - Democrat	25
2 - Republican	25
3 - Independent	30
4 - Other	15
5 - Don't know/No Opinion	4