# NFL distances itself from Kansas City Chiefs kicker's controversial commencement speech



The NFL has officially distanced itself from comments made by Kansas City Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker during his commencement speech at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. Delivered on May 11, 2024, the speech included Butker’s conservative viewpoints on gender roles, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, and abortion. He claimed that women should focus on marriage and motherhood rather than careers and criticized President Joe Biden’s policies.

The NFL released a statement noting that Butker's opinions do not reflect those of the organization. Jonathan Beane, the NFL's senior vice president and chief diversity and inclusion officer, emphasized the league’s commitment to inclusion.

Maria Shriver publicly criticized the speech, labeling it as “demeaning” towards women. She disagreed with Butker's assertion that women’s primary roles are as wives and mothers, highlighting her own professional and personal achievements as a counterpoint.

Graduate Susannah Leisegang also condemned the speech on social media, describing it as "horrible" and noting that while many attendees applauded, she and several other women were vocal in their disagreement.

Following the backlash, the NFL reiterated its stance on diversity and inclusion, distancing itself further from Butker's personal comments.