

NBC Pledge of Allegiance Apology Not Enough for Family Research Council



AP Photo/David Duprey

An apology is just not good enough for the Family Research Council.

NBC apologized for removing the phrase “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance in a broadcast of the U.S. Open Golf Tournament on Sunday, but the FRC wants more.

The council is urging its members to send NBC a message, demanding that “the network ... take corrective action to ensure that the public airwaves will not be used to censor our nation’s Pledge of Allegiance.”

Tony Perkins, president of the FRC, sent an eblast Tuesday to its members, which explains the situation and requests that they take part in asking NBC to “remedy this abuse by airing a series of public service announcements with the entire Pledge of Allegiance.”

“Remember the airwaves belong to the public and NBC is granted permission to use those airwaves,” the eblast says. “Removing ‘under God’ from one of the most widely viewed sports programs is deeply disturbing and is a misuse of the public trust they’ve been granted.”

About three hours into the broadcast, announcer Dan Hicks offered a corporate apology: “Regrettably, a portion of the Pledge of Allegiance that was in that feature was edited out. It was not done to upset anyone, and we’d like to apologize to those of you who were offended by it.”

NBC Sports Universal issued a second apology on Monday from Vice President of Communications Chris McCloskey. He apologized if the edit upset anyone, and said the “decision was made by a small group of people to edit portions of the Pledge of Allegiance. This was a bad decision.”

“They made a deliberate decision to leave out a part of our nation’s pledge,” Perkins said on air in a CNN report. “What if they would have left out ‘liberty’ or ‘justice?’ American people obviously caught this and they responded to it very quickly and [NBC] began to backtrack.”

Perkins explained that the addition of “under God” was important to the Pledge of Allegiance and he said most Americans think the phrase should stay.

In a June 2002 Gallup Poll, respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a federal court’s ruling that it was unconstitutional for the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited in public school classrooms. Eighty-four percent disagreed.