

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 18, 2016

Stephen B. Burke  
Chief Executive Officer  
NBC Universal  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, NY 10112

Dear Mr. Burke:

We are writing to express our concerns and the concerns of our constituents sparked by comments made about Macedonian history during NBC's coverage of the Opening Ceremonies of the Games of the XXXI Olympiad on Friday, August 5, 2016.

During the evening telecast, NBC commentators inaccurately associated Philip II of Macedon and Alexander the Great to the nation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) by mentioning these two figures of Greek history during the presentation of the team from FYROM. In doing so, the broadcast strongly implied that these Greek figures descended from FYROM, when in fact, they are Greek. Furthermore, by not strictly using the name FYROM during the Opening Ceremony, the commentators undermined the position of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which recognizes FYROM as the nation's interim name.

Philip II and Alexander the Great were, as your commentators noted, from the ancient city-state of Macedonia, which was Hellenic – a historical fact confirmed by historians and classicist scholars. Even an unintended implication of separation between the history of ancient Macedonia and the history of Greece has inadvertently inserted the Olympic Games into a sensitive geopolitical issue which could strain relations with Greece, our steadfast ally, and the Greek American community.

As co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, we have long advocated for a permanent name for FYROM that respects and represents history. Historically inaccurate and incendiary commentary on an international stage is an impediment to resolving the dispute. We urge NBC to issue an on-air correction during the Closing Ceremony.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

  
**GUS M. BILIRAKIS**  
Member of Congress

  
**CAROLYN B. MALONEY**  
Member of Congress