



The Associated Press reported Monday that NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said that the deal for the purchase of the Phoenix Coyotes by a group headed by Jerry Reinsdorf would be beneficial to the franchise and the league.

"It will be great for this league and that franchise if Jerry is able, with his partners, to consummate that transaction," Bettman said before Game 2 of the Western Conference semifinals between the Vancouver Canucks and Chicago Blackhawks.

Bettman also said the sale of the team is on the horizon but the commissioner would not give a timetable. "There is much that has to be done with the city of Glendale, both with the league and the prospective owners," Bettman said.

While Bettman is pleased, conservative watchdog group The Goldwater Institute is not. The group, which tracks public subsidies to private corporations, said the Reinsdorf places too much burden on the Glendale taxpayers and not enough on Reinsdorf's group. Goldwater was also not happy with Reinsdorf's option to sell the team after five years.

"He really seems to have insulated himself completely from any financial liability," said Carrie Ann Sitren, a Goldwater lawyer, after the proposals were released. "It is not a certain prospect for the team to stick around in the long-term. The Ice Edge deal looks more hard-working, as in

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let's be creative and see how this can work.”

The Coyotes are in need of stability in ownership, the city and league appear willing to take the risk of Reinsdorf group opting to sell the team after a few years.

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Matthew Coller is a staff member of the Business of Sports Network, and is a freelance writer. He can be [followed on Twitter](#)

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