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November 18, 2015

Mr. Sunil Gulati
President
United States Soccer Federation
1801 South Prairie Ave.
Chicago, IL 60616

RE: Urge U.S. Soccer Federation to support and advocate FIFA reforms

Dear President Gulati:

It was an honor to meet you at the White House, as President Obama recognized the accomplishment of the U.S. Women's national soccer team in winning the 2015 Women's World Cup. As we approach the upcoming FIFA Reform Committee meeting, I am reminded of President Obama's remarks that day about the U.S. Women's National Team: "They've inspired millions of girls to dream bigger, and by the way, inspired millions of boys to look at girls differently, which is just as important... Playing like a girl means being the best. That's what American women do. That's what American girls do. That's why we celebrate this team. They've done it with class. They've done it with the right way."

The same should hold true for all female athletes around the world. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Soccer Caucus and strong advocate for gender equity in sports and education, I strongly urge you and the U.S. Soccer Federation to support and advocate for the FIFA reform plan submitted by Moya Dodd, Chair, of the FIFA Task Force for Women's Football. As you know it calls for increased investments in girls' and women's soccer across the globe and requires gender balance in the governance of FIFA.

For the sake of honest, transparent and equitable international competition, FIFA must be reformed. The United States should be the leader in reform efforts and women's soccer can be the key. It's a sad fact that only three of FIFA's 26 executive committee members are female, and one of them cannot even vote. Only two of its 209 member association presidents are women. This means women make up less than 1 percent of FIFA's voting population. U.S. Soccer and private-sector sponsors must press to root out the corruption at FIFA and begin a new chapter of gender equity that grows the women's game and support girls leagues and tournaments across the globe.

FIFA must elevate female soccer teams and female leaders to provide opportunities for girls and women. In turn, I am confident that greater gender diversity can help address many of FIFA's ills. The reforms will begin to correct long-standing discrimination, lift the status of women, and improve diplomacy in a world that needs it. The best example of the importance of such reforms is the change provided by Title IX in the United States. Since passage of Title IX,

female participation in sports has flourished. This did not happen by itself, but took a law and consistent enforcement over decades. Due to the corruption in FIFA and the few minor investments made in women's international soccer to date, FIFA also needs an enforceable, overriding commitment to effectively grow the women's game and transform the organization into one that is modern and equitable.

I urge the U.S. Soccer Federation to strongly advocate for the gender equity reforms and to play a leadership role in pressing FIFA to raise the status of women in international soccer. Once again, I strongly support the FIFA reform plan submitted by Moya Dodd, Chair, of the FIFA Task Force for Women's Football and am pleased to see the groundswell of support for the plan. U.S. Soccer is well-positioned to lead the way and champion Title IX-like reforms at the international level, invest in the women's competition and boost pay equity for female players. Thank you.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-225-3376 or in Florida at 813-871-2817.

Sincerely,



Kathy Castor
United States Representative
Florida – District 14