

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Carlos Cordeiro
U.S. Soccer President
1801 S. Prairie Ave.
Chicago, IL 60616

July 3, 2019

Dear Mr. Cordeiro,

We are writing to express our disapproval of the inequities in pay, publicity, and investment that the U.S. Women's National Team (USWNT) has continued to endure. The USWNT is expertly defending their three-time World Cup title in the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup and represents our nation on the greatest stage in professional soccer. Yet, the USWNT has been forced to fight for equity and fairness off the field, and recently agreed to enter into mediation over pay inequality in the midst of the World Cup.

The USWNT is the most successful team in women's soccer history, winning World Cup titles in 1991, 1999 and 2015; winning four Olympic gold medals; and holding the No. 1 ranking entering this year's World Cup. However, despite doing the same job as the U.S. Men's National Team, USWNT players are receiving inferior wages, working conditions, and investment from U.S. Soccer.

The inequities that these women champions have faced as members of the USWNT are indefensible. According to reporting done by reputable news sources such as the *New York Times*, *Politico*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, there is clear, ongoing institutionalized gender discrimination within the Federation starting with unequal pay and extending to training, travel, marketing and promotion, as well as availability of medical personnel and support staff. It includes an embarrassing lack of basic provisions for a national team from inferior and dangerous playing fields to a lack of charter flights.

The three-time world championship winning women's team received \$1.725 million for winning the 2015 World Cup, just one-third of the \$5.375 million that U.S. Soccer awarded the men's team for losing in the round of 16 of the Men's World Cup. The pay inequity doesn't stop at the prize money. A woman player's base salary alone is approximately \$30,000 less than her male counterpart's, and when including bonuses, women's income is just 38 percent of men's income. These disparities are particularly questionable given that U.S. women's games generated more total revenue than U.S. men's games over the last three years. In fact, from 2016 to 2018, women's games generated approximately \$50.8 million in revenue compared with \$49.9 million for the men's team. Furthermore, the women's triumph in 2015 moved U.S. Soccer's projected

net loss of \$429,929 that year to a \$17.7 million profit, and the 2015 Women's World Cup final had more views than any soccer match in U.S. history.

The U.S. Soccer Federation should work to correct course and close the wage gap so that the only thing women athletes are fighting for is the world title or a gold medal. Instead, the message sent to women and girls is that their skills and accomplishments are of lesser value.


The lack of parity must end. Congress has a strong interest in ensuring fairness and compliance with the Amateur Sports Act of 1978, which requires National Governing Bodies, like U.S. Soccer, to "provide equitable support and encouragement" to women.

We request responses to the following:


- How does the U.S. Soccer Federation plan to address institutionalized gender discrimination within the Federation?
- Please send official documentation of the salary, bonuses, and prize money for the U.S. National Women's and Men's teams. What is your justification for the differences in compensation?
- What is the U.S. Soccer Federation doing to market and promote the USWNT? How does this compare with the Federation's marketing and promotion efforts for the Men's National Team?
- Does the U.S. Soccer Federation intend to make any agreement reached through mediation available for public inspection?
- If an agreement is reached, does the U.S. Soccer Federation intend to make agreed-to policy change permanent for future USWNT players?


Your cooperation and prompt response are appreciated. We look forward to hearing from you.


Sincerely,


Jackie Speier
Co-Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus


Lois Frankel
Co-Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus

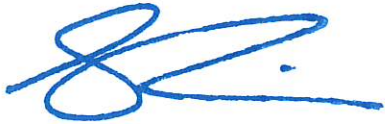

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Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



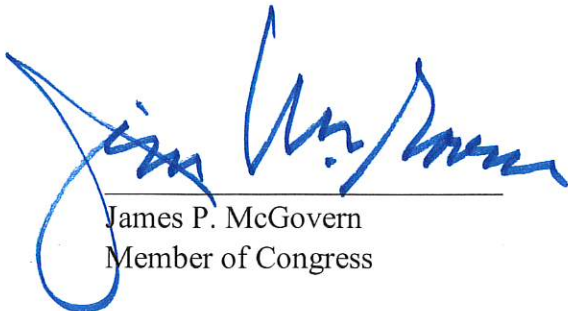
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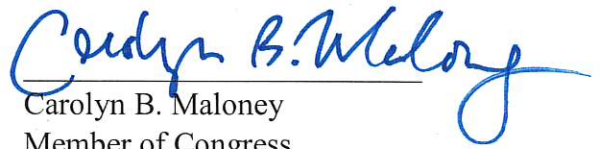
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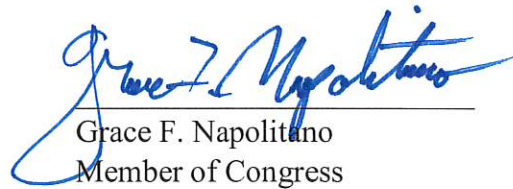
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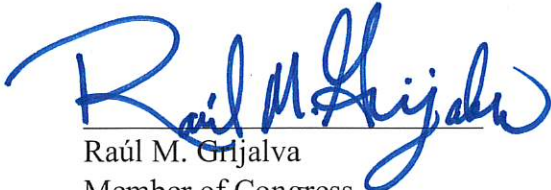
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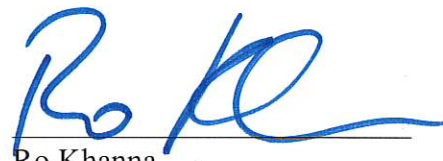

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