

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
511 Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
172 Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC, 20510

May 3rd, 2021

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Senator Capito,

We, the undersigned, write to you to ask for the speedy reintroduction of the Equal Pay for Team USA Act of 2019. As former Olympic athletes and advocates for women athletes, the legislation is necessary for our Olympians, especially as we head to Tokyo this summer.

Growing up in Richland, Washington, soccer formed some of my earliest memories. I, Hope Solo, have always loved the sport, and feel incredibly fortunate to have been able to play through several local programs including at the University of Washington. My love of soccer carried me all the way to the international stage where I got to represent what women are capable of at several World Cups and Olympics. I quickly realized, though, that women, despite all that we achieve, are never valued near that of men. In 2015, I set out to change that. Six years later, while the United States Soccer Federation has tried to silence me, I persist. The Equal Pay for Team USA Act isn't about me, though, it's about the next generation of American Champions who should be free to focus on the game they love and not the political game of gender equality.

Although far from Long Island, New York, I, Lisa Stoya, chose West Virginia University to begin my collegiate soccer career in 2000, as it reflected an opportunity to grow a young, promising program into a national powerhouse. After fifteen years as a college coach at my alma mater, my passion for "the people's" game continues. I am grateful to belong to a supportive, energetic, and hardworking community of athletes, a community that can only be found in West Virginia. Working for one of the best women's programs in the country granted me the opportunity to excel at the highest levels, including being a member of the United States youth national team pool system in 2003. I have enjoyed assisting with the U-19 WYNT camp in 2018 and working with potential future Olympians. Only a tiny percentage of these athletes who reach an Olympic level have the opportunity to make it to one of the highest international competitive levels in their sport. As a coach to these women, it upsets me that they are rarely treated equally with the men who represent the United States.

Twenty-seven years coaching amateur athletes in college sports has left me, Nikki Izzo-Brown, with the belief that all athletes should receive equal compensation, benefits, and treatment. As an NCAA head women's soccer coach for more than 25 years, I have seen perpetual inequality in sports. I have won 17 conference championships, produced 29 professional players, and made 21 straight NCAA appearances; I have seen firsthand just how hard all these women work to achieve greatness, yet they struggle for equal recognition, compensation, and treatment. I have witnessed this fight for decades, and my wish is that the

next generation of athletes I coach no longer worry about equality. I saw it as a player, and I see it as a coach; it's time to put an end to inequality in Olympic sport.

To the rest of the world, the United States represents a promise of equality for all, yet we too often fail to deliver on that promise. As we head to Tokyo, it is imperative that our leaders make clear that all athletes have equal pay, training, access to medical care, and other forms of compensation. That starts with your leadership and your Equal Pay for Team USA Act. The legislation you introduced last Congress will go a long way to addressing the concerns that we have raised in the press, in the courts, and in this letter. We stand with you, ready to do whatever it takes to pass this legislation. We hope this letter will encourage you to reintroduce the Equal Pay for Team USA Act soon.

Thank you for your consideration and your support for women athletes everywhere.

Sincerely,

Hope Solo

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'HS' with a small vertical line underneath the 'S'.

Lisa Stoia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L-Stoia'.

Nikki Izzo-Brown

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikki Izzo-Brown'.