

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2017

Mark Emmert
President
National Collegiate Athletic Association
700 W. Washington Street
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206

Dear President Emmert:

Last fall, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) began asking its member institutions to pledge to develop hiring practices that promote “ethnic and racial diversity, gender equity and inclusion.” We support this effort, and we write today, a year after the introduction of that pledge, to ask about what progress has been made. We respectfully request that you provide us with an update about participation in the pledge and inform us about what further actions the NCAA is considering to improve diversity among coaches and athletic department administrators at its member institutions. We hope to see clear evidence that the NCAA’s pledge is translating quickly to more diverse and inclusive athletic departments. In addition, we ask that the NCAA consider options for identifying, disseminating, and enforcing effective standards for equitable hiring practices among its member institutions.

The NCAA’s pledge has received broad support from institutions and conference commissioners across the NCAA’s three divisions. Yet people of color and women continue to be significantly underrepresented in coaching and athletic department leadership positions. In fact, less than 10 percent of coaches at the NCAA’s member institutions are people of color. Coaches who are men far outnumber those who are women—even among women’s teams. People of color and women also make up only a small fraction of athletic directors in the NCAA.

Although we understand that the lack of diversity among coaches and athletic department administrators will not be corrected overnight, we know how important it is to take strong action to improve diversity. To that end, we ask that you inform us about the extent to which the NCAA’s member institutions have implemented new hiring practices and what those practices are, the extent to which those practices have improved diversity within intercollegiate athletics, and what support and resources the NCAA is providing to help schools in this effort.


We know that you share our belief in the power of inclusion. We look forward to supporting you and the NCAA in efforts to make sure people of color and women are no longer underrepresented among coaches and leaders of intercollegiate athletic programs. And we look forward to learning more about the measurable effects of the NCAA's diversity pledge and any additional steps the NCAA is considering to turn the pledge into action.

Thank you for your attention to our request.


Sincerely,



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress


Cedric Richmond
Member of Congress


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress


Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress


Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress


Maxine Waters
Member of Congress