

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 11, 2025

Jessica Berman
Commissioner
National Women's Soccer League
551 Fifth Ave
New York, New York 10176

Dear Commissioner Berman:

As members of the Democratic Women's Caucus and House Democratic Caucus, we are deeply invested in the continued success and growth of women's sports. We write regarding reports that the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) declined the Washington Spirit's proposed contract with player Trinity Rodman, which the National Women's Soccer League Players Association (NWSLPA) has cited as a violation of its collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the NWSL.¹ Congress maintains an oversight responsibility to ensure compliance with federal labor law, including the *National Labor Relations Act* (NLRA), which codifies the policy of the United States to promote and protect collective bargaining. Congress has also maintained a longstanding interest and oversight role in protecting athletes' rights and safety in the NWSL. Therefore, we are compelled to take seriously any allegation that the terms of a duly negotiated CBA are not being upheld. **We urge the NWSL to work in good faith with the NWSLPA and Ms. Rodman to resolve this matter in a timely and transparent manner consistent with federal labor law requiring that the terms of collectively bargained agreements be honored.**

We understand that Ms. Rodman and the Washington Spirit reached a contract agreement that was subsequently rejected by the NWSL, citing concerns that the deal went against the "spirit" of competition rules and could potentially circumvent future salary cap considerations. In response, the NWSLPA filed a grievance on Ms. Rodman's behalf, asserting that the NWSL's decision infringed upon her free agency rights established under the CBA.²

¹ Kassouf, J. (2025, December 4). *NWSLPA files grievance on vetoed Rodman offer*. ESPN.

https://www.espn.com/soccer/story/_/id/47202635/nwslpa-files-grievance-league-trinity-rodman-contract-offer

² Jeff Kassouf, (20205, December 4) "Players union says NWSL engaged in 'flagrant' violation of Trinity Rodman's free agent rights," *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6861921/2025/12/04/trinity-rodman-nwsl-free-agent-players-union/>

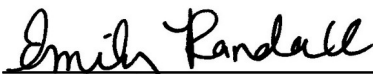
Following years of advocacy from players and communities, the most recent CBA reached between the NWSL and the NWSLPA marked a historic step forward for women's sports. It established critical labor protections, including unrestricted free agency, salary minimums, training standards, and more.³ These gains reflect the value and professionalism of the athletes who drive the NWSL's success. Any action that appears to narrow, reinterpret, or delay the implementation of these hard-fought rights raises significant oversight concerns, as the failure to honor the terms of the CBA is intertwined with compliance with federal labor law and with preserving the integrity of the negotiating process itself.

We recognize the NWSL's responsibility to maintain competitive balance and uphold standards. However, clarity, consistency, and adherence to the CBA are essential. This is not only for Ms. Rodman's case, but for the precedent it sets and for confidence in the NWSL's governance. A landmark CBA is meaningful only if its provisions are honored in practice. Women athletes must know that the rights negotiated and secured are both clear and enforceable.

The rise in support for women's sports and women athletes has been remarkable, yet the treatment and recognition of women athletes still lags behind. The NWSL has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by ensuring fairness, honoring the commitments made through the CBA, and reinforcing trust among players, owners, and fans.

We believe that resolving this matter promptly and in accordance with both the CBA and federal labor law will benefit all parties and strengthen women's sports and women athletes' continued success. Given Congress's oversight responsibilities, we request regular updates on progress toward resolving this matter.

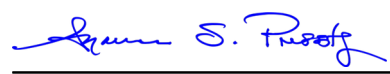
Sincerely,



Emily Randall
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

³ National Women's Soccer League, (2024, August 22) *NWSL and NWSLPA agree to historic collective bargaining agreement two years ahead of expiration* [Press release], <https://www.nwslsoccer.com/news/nwsl-and-nwslpa-agree-to-historic-collective-bargaining-agreement>



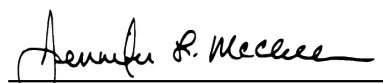
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



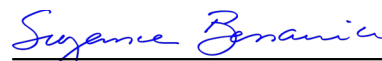
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Katherine M. Clark
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



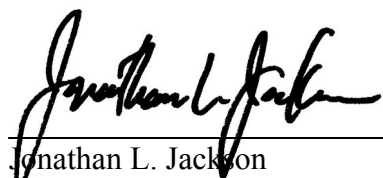
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



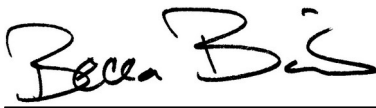
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



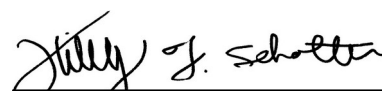
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



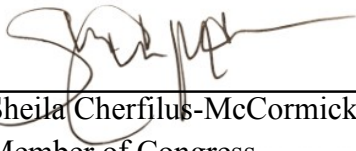
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



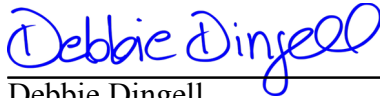
Becca Balint
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress




Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



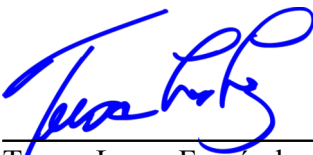
Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



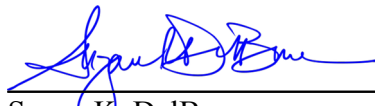
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



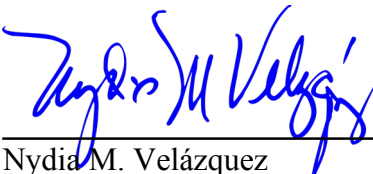
Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Emilia Strong Sykes
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Deborah K. Ross
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Nydia M. Velázquez
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Val Hoyle
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Ro Khanna
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