

Homestretch Foundation
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Thursday, April 18, 2019

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
California State Assembly
Committee on Appropriations
California State Capitol
10th and L Streets, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 467 - Oppose Unless Amended

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez,

I am writing to Oppose Assembly Bill 467 Unless Amended. Please close the loopholes of gender exclusion that happens on California State Lands, specifically in regard to professional cycling.

The most prestigious professional cycling race in the United States in the AMGEN Tour of California that takes place every year in May (this year: May 12-18, 2019). During its 14-year history, the professional women of cycling have been marginalized: racing fewer days and shorter distances and some events, less prize money. While the men race seven days at AMGEN Tour of California, the women are only granted three. There is a longstanding tradition of sexism in the sport of professional cycling, and we seek to eradicate such behavior and bring the sport to the proper realm of modernity and progress.

As a retired professional cyclist, I raced the Tour of California in 2009 and 2014... when it was only one day for women (and an “invite-only” time trial as a proclaimed second day). Since then, the race once grew to four days in 2016... then was shortened to three. There is no justification for such a step backward in progress.

While the sponsors, race directors and other political affiliations in the cycling world will attempt to offer every possible excuse as why they are excluding women—“too expensive,” “not enough sponsors,” etc—the reality is these claims are false. Most sponsors, such as AMGEN, are not even introduced to the possibility that women want to race—and are capable of racing—the same number of days as the men. In fact, there is a direct demand by sports fans

for women's pro racing, and the data proves so at events where women are allowed to race the exact same days as the men.

Sadly, many of the professional women in cycling bear the burden of not being able to speak out and call for change... as they fear being dropped from their team (and their paycheck) for pushing social boundaries. As a retired pro cyclist, I fight for equality on their behalf.

California has the game-changing ability to create change for equality by leading the way to establish gender equity on their roadways. By amending AB 467 Amendment to include to protect female pro athletes from gender-based discrimination on state roadways, California will set the much-needed example for the rest of our country to follow.

Based on the California Unruh Civil Rights Act, which makes the case for the inclusion of women athletes in competitions, and in support of equal prize money at participant level, we recommend the following AB 467 Amendment:

(A) "Competition" means competition or tournament on lands owned by the state and managed by the department.

(B) "Prize compensation" includes purse money, other awards, honors, gifts, rewards, goods, or other payment.

(C) "Event" means a segment of a competition such as a heat, race, or match, or game.

(2) The department/commission, shall require compliance with California non-discriminatory practices for individuals or groups protected by the California Unruh Civil Rights Act as a condition of a permit/lease, for a competition that awards prize compensation to competitors. Prize compensation shall be identical for all categories at each participant level. Event playing time shall be identical for each category, for a competition that awards prize compensation to competitors. The department/commission shall not approve a permit/lease for an event that does not comply with this condition.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Kathryn Bertine

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