



SURF EQUITY

Website: surfequity.org

Instagram: @SurfEquity

Twitter: @SurfEquity

Email: sabrina@surfequity.org

Tuesday, February 15, 2022

Director Laura H. Thielen
City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation
1000 Ulu'ōhi'a Street
Suite 309
Kapolei, Hawai'i 96707
Email: lthielen@honolulu.gov

Re: Shore Water Events: Women Want to Compete on O'ahu!

Dear Director Thielen,

Please do not approve future event permits for professional sports competitions that exclude women athletes, provide unequal prize compensation in gendered categories at each participant level and lack equal playing time/competition time.

We strongly recommend that the City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation Department require the following for all professional surf competition event permits:

- A women's division and a men's division with an identical number of participants in each gendered category
- Identical number of competition events/heats in each gendered category
- Identical playing time/heat time in each gendered category
- Equal prize compensation in each gendered category

The following comments relate to your proposed Gender Equity section for the Shore Water Events administrative rules (Title 19, chapter 4).

The inclusion of "(iv)Gender(s) of participants" does not go far enough in §19-4-12 North shore calendar conflict resolution.

Gender equity should never be reduced to "criteria" in a whimsical point-based conflict resolution rating system. Gender equity must be included as an event permit requirement. This means no gender equity results in no event permit. Gender equity violations should result in a minimum fee of

\$50,000 per incident and/or loss of permit and loss of consideration for future permits.

The following note included under Advisory Committee Options 19-4-3
Definitions:

“Option: To add language whereas two women and two men shall be appointed to the Advisory Committee.”

It’s our understanding that some of the Mayor’s Surf Advisory Committee members may have served for 20+ years. For decades, this resulted in an all-male committee that did nothing to support gender equity in professional surfing.

We recommend adding language that requires an equal number of women and men on the Mayor’s Surf Advisory Committee. We also strongly recommend that a committee term not exceed 4-years and that members be limited to 2-terms only.

We also request that anyone employed by a professional surf league or employed by a surf competition sponsor be excluded from consideration because of a perception of conflict of interest.

Additionally, professional sports competitions should be required to include an equal number of women judges and women announcers. Please add this as an event permit condition.

Here’s the Problem: Discrimination is the biggest challenge facing women professional surfers in Hawaii and globally. Gender discrimination results in the exclusion of women from athletic competitions. Women athletes have fewer opportunities to earn prize money and ranking points.

Actual Damages: Gender-based discrimination results in less playing/surfing time for women athletes, fewer opportunities, loss of income, lack of achievement recognition, smaller marketing budgets, fewer sponsorship opportunities, substandard facilities, lack of coaching or no coaching, less or no training, limited or no safety training, second-rate equipment, inadequate healthcare, injuries, and prolonged injury recovery. The list goes on...

We asked for equal pay: In July 2018, the Committee for Equity in Women’s Surfing met with the World Surf League at a hotel in Redwood City, CA and presented a proposal for equal prize money. We asked the WSL to end gender-based discrimination. CEO Sophie Goldschmidt said, “No” and threatened to cancel Mavericks rather than pay women equally.

We won't back down: We stood our ground and went back to the California Coastal Commission and requested equal access and equal pay.

We want results: In Sept 2018, the WSL announced global equal prize money for every WSL event. Today, the WSL Championship Tour prize money is **not equal** because the tour includes 35 men and only 18 women. Sadly, the WSL also excludes women from an equal opportunity to compete in the Olympics.

In 2018, we won the battle for global equal pay in professional surfing however that battle is still being fought. We need your help to close loopholes and correct gender discrimination.

Our work is the subject of two documentary films, and hundreds of news stories including the New York Times Magazine feature published Feb 10, 2019, "The Fight for Gender Equality, In One of the Most Dangerous Sports on Earth."

- New York Times Magazine:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/02/07/magazine/women-surf-big-wave.html>

Today, we're continuing the fight for equality, equal access, inclusion, and equal pay. Please help meet equity goals by updating the event permit process to require gender equity.

Sincerely,



Sabrina Brennan
Founder, Surf Equity & Sport Equity
Co-Founder, Committee for Equity in Women's Surfing

Copy:

Rick Blangiardi, Mayor
mayor@honolulu.gov

Tommy Waters, Chair
tommy.waters@honolulu.gov

Heidi Tsuneyoshi, Councilmember
htsuneyoshi@honolulu.gov