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Assembly California Legislature



MIKE ENG

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August 27, 2008

Carolyn F. Bivens
Commissioner
Ladies Professional Golf Association
100 International Golf Drive
Daytona Beach, Florida 32124-1092

Dear Ms. Bivens,

As a member of the California State Legislature and Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, I am writing to urge the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) to retract its newly proposed policy to require all participating golf players with at least two years seniority to be proficient in English starting in 2009.

I am deeply offended by the LPGA's decision to contemplate such a discriminatory policy. Not only is this punishment severe and unfair to the world's most renowned LPGA professionals, this policy goes contrary to the democratic values I and many Californians hold dear with respect to diversity and equality.

In recent years, the LPGA has been dominated by foreign-born players, lead by Mexican-born Lorena Ochoa. Further, players from Mexico, Taiwan and Korea have won the last five major championships. These players face plenty of challenges competing in the highest level of golf in the world. This new requirement would place an unfair burden on players that are labeled as English inept and may ultimately effect their focus on the sport.

Additionally, it is my understanding that the LPGA's newly proposed requirement stems from an effort to satisfy your sponsor's interests. I cannot comprehend how the LPGA could seriously consider such a decision, especially when Asian American spending power alone is estimated to reach nearly \$528 billion by 2009. The new policy is divisive and intensifies existing xenophobic sentiments against minorities and will ultimately reduce the marketability of your organization and the products of your sponsors.

For the reasons stated above, I strongly urge you to retract your proposed policy that emphasizes a LPGA player's English proficiency rather than their golfing prowess. If you have any questions pertaining to this request, please feel free to contact me at (916) 319-2049.

Sincerely,



MIKE ENG
Assembly member, 49th District

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Cc:

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