



Dear Commissioner Goodell:

The American Civil Liberties Union, Futures Without Violence, National Women's Law Center, and TIME'S UP Foundation write to urge the National Football League to make public the results of the investigation into sexual harassment endured by workers at the Washington Football Team.

The undersigned organizations have followed with great concern the news accounts of sexual harassment and abuse experienced by women employees of the Washington Football Team ("WFT" or "the Team"), formerly known as the Washington Redskins. We understand that the Wilkinson Stekloff law firm, which was retained by the NFL to investigate these allegations, interviewed many women who have been subjected to a sexually-hostile work environment and dozens of women who were victimized by male executives during Dan Snyder's tenure as owner.

We also understand that a countless number of witnesses, including former male employees, provided detailed information about Mr. Snyder's abusive behavior and his own misconduct. The TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund has provided legal support to dozens of women who courageously came forward to expose the two-decades long practices of sexual exploitation and abuse while working for Mr. Snyder's organization, and several sat for interviews with lawyers from the Wilkinson law firm. They shared personal accounts of the significant role Mr. Snyder played in creating a sexually-hostile work environment that allowed women employees to be treated like play objects for the amusement of male executives and wealthy clients.

Now that the investigation nears completion, we write to urge the NFL to release, in its entirety, the investigative report prepared by the Wilkinson law firm when it is completed.¹

On July 16, 2020, *The Washington Post*, published a lengthy exposé, entitled "*From dream job to nightmare*," based on interviews with more than 40 current and former women employees, who detailed the sexual harassment and verbal abuse they experienced on the job. As *The Post* noted, most of the women spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing fear that Mr. Snyder would sue them to enforce nondisclosure agreements ("NDAs"), which threatened severe legal penalties if they spoke negatively about the club, its management, or its owners.

The team refused a request from *The Post* to release these employees from the NDAs, which allowed Mr. Snyder to silence women with knowledge of his own abuses and to falsely claim that he was unaware of the abuse. Mr. Snyder responded publicly to these allegations via a press release, stating that the "behavior described in yesterday's *Washington Post* article has no place in our franchise or society" and vowed to "institute new policies and procedures" after

¹ We understand that some witnesses participated in the investigation with the assurance that their names and identifying information would not be made public. Those assurances must, of course, be honored, and that information should not be included when the report is made public.

an independent investigation into the allegations is completed.” However, Mr. Snyder retained investigators to contact certain potential witnesses and their friends and family and took other steps to intimidate women from coming forward, which ultimately led the NFL to take over the investigation.

On August 26, 2020, *The Post* published another bombshell exposé regarding sexual harassment by the Washington Football Team organization, which directly implicated Mr. Snyder (See: “*Lewd cheerleader videos, sexist rules: Ex-employees decry Washington’s NFL team workplace*”). In response to this reporting, you issued a statement condemning “the unprofessional, disturbing and abhorrent behavior and workplace environment alleged in the report, which is entirely inconsistent with our standards and has no place in the NFL.” You further noted that the NFL would monitor the progress of the Wilkinson law firm investigation and ensure that the club and its employees “satisfy their obligation to give full cooperation to the investigators.” You assured the public that “[w]hen the investigation concludes, we will review the findings and take any appropriate action at that time.”

There cannot be accountability without transparency. Many dozens of women courageously came forward, at great risk to their careers, livelihood and well-being, to expose the practices that you correctly labeled as abhorrent because they know that secrecy allows sexual harassment and abuse to thrive. If the NFL fails to release the report, these women will feel – correctly, we believe – that the risk they took was in vain and that Mr. Snyder succeeded in silencing them.

One of the important lessons we have learned from the revelations of the #MeToo and TIME’S UP movements is that survivors regain a sense of power and are able to take great strides toward healing when they tell their stories and have those who mistreated them held accountable. In addition to being a necessary step for the brave workers who have come forward, public accountability will show other workers, in the NFL and beyond, that they are not alone in the fight against workplace harassment and that they do not have to endure abuse to earn a paycheck.

Accountability requires that the full record of WFT’s and Mr. Snyder’s two-decades long misconduct is made public. If the NFL fails to do so, the public and NFL workers will never believe that the League cares about the women who work within their franchises or will actually hold teams and their owners accountable. Furthermore, the victims of this abuse – who Mr. Snyder has refused to allow out of the NDAs he coerced them into, except with respect to their communications with the investigators – will face the trauma of being silenced again, and this pervasive and abhorrent behavior and culture of sexual harassment in the WFT will continue unchecked.

Please remember that women make up 47% of NFL fans, and recent surveys have demonstrated that 81% of women have faced sexual harassment. Women are watching. The world is watching. We urge you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

The American Civil Liberties Union, Futures Without Violence, National Women’s Law Center, and TIME’S UP Foundation