

May 6, 2014

Mr. Adam Silver
Commissioner
National Basketball Association
645 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10022

After Donald Sterling: Now What?

Dear Commissioner Silver,

The Greenlining Institute wholeheartedly supports and embraces your swift, decisive action to punish Los Angeles Clippers Owner Donald Sterling for his racist actions and to invest the \$2.5 million fine in anti-discrimination efforts. However, we also believe that these important actions are only the first steps in what must be a multipronged effort to match the NBA's reality with the ideals of diversity and respect you have so eloquently stated.

After Sterling, now what?

In addition to being "a time for healing," as you said, this is a time to get to work. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar said it best when he recently wrote in Time magazine, "Instead of being content to punish Sterling and go back to sleep, we need to be inspired to vigilantly seek out, expose, and eliminate racism at its first signs." Given your leadership thus far, there has never been a better time to address the persistent racial disparities facing the business and sports world. In that spirit, we strongly recommend that you take the following actions within 30 days:

Proposed Actions

1. Send all 30 NBA teams a mandatory data request seeking the following:
 - a. *The gender and ethnic/racial make-up of each team's personnel. Data should be broken down by categories such as Senior Management, Business Operations, Finance, Ticket Operations, etc. For example, the Washington Wizards has a staff directory that can be found at http://www.nba.com/wizards/wizards_directory.html. The Wizards should supply you with the gender, ethnic and racial background of each*

Greenlining Coalition:

Allen Temple Baptist Church
American G.I. Forum
Anewamerica
Asian Business Assn.
Asian Inc.
Asian Journal
API Small Business Program
Black Business Assn.
Brightline Defense Project
California Black Chamber of Commerce
California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

California Journal for Filipino Americans
California Rural Legal Assistance
Chicana/Latina Foundation
Community Child Care Council
Community Resource Project
Council of Asian American Business Assn.
El Concilio of San Mateo County
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
FAME Renaissance
Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce
Greater Phoenix Urban League

Hispanic American Growers Assn.
KHEIR Center
Korean Churches for Community Development
La Maestra Family Clinic
Mentoring in Medicine Science, Inc.
Mexican American Political Assn.
Mission Housing Development Corporation
Mission Language & Vocational School
NaFFAA
OCCUR
Our Weekly

Precinct Reporter Group
Rising Sun Energy Center
Sacramento Observer
SF African American Chamber of Commerce
San Francisco Housing Development
Search to Involve Pilipino-Americans
Southeast Asia Comm. Center
TELACU
Time for Change Foundation
Ward Economic Development corp.
West Angeles CDC
West Coast Black Publishers Assn.

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- of the staff members listed on this page, and other teams should supply equivalent data.*
- b. The gender and ethnic/racial makeup of the teams' suppliers, including data on ownership of all vendors with whom the teams do business. Data should be broken down by gender, ethnicity, and race. For example, teams should report to you their total spending by both dollars and percentage with women- and minority-owned businesses. We note with some interest that the NBA had a Vendor Diversity program for the 2012 All-Star Game and some prior All-Star Games, but that its former web page, www.nba.com/allstarvendordiversity, is no longer active. As of last week, a search of NBA.com for the phrase "vendor diversity" turned up zero hits from later than 2008.*

1. Appoint an NBA Diversity Council that reports directly to you. We recommend that the Diversity Council's first task should be to review the diversity data supplied to you by each of the 30 teams and to recommend a plan of action to address both any gaps in data and areas where diversity appears lacking.
2. Share this diversity data with the public in an annual report that includes recommendations for improvement.

The only thing surprising in the recent controversy over offensive, racist comments by Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling is that anyone is surprised. It may be comforting to pretend that America's race problems are finished and the occasional publicly exposed bigot is an aberration, but it's not true. Through an unhappy set of circumstances, the NBA has been handed an extraordinary opportunity to become part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Commissioner Silver, we respectfully urge you to take swift action on the above recommendations, and we gladly offer our assistance and support as you do so.

Sincerely,



Orson Aguilar
Executive Director