

Protect the Future of U.S. Surfing: Uphold Federal Law and Olympic Integrity

THE ISSUE.

The U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) is manipulating rules and National Governing Body (NGB) definitions to benefit U.S. Ski & Snowboard (USSS) — even though USSS neither governs nor represents the sport of surfing. USSS was invited to apply for and participate in a public hearing to become the NGB for U.S. surfing, which would violate federal law and the Olympic Charter. Their proposal seeks to exploit a loophole granting USSS commercial rights and governance of just the top Olympic surfers - divorcing the top surfers and Olympic benefits from the rest of the development pipeline. These actions threaten the future of American surfing, undermine athletes' rights, risk barring US surfers from the LA28 Olympics, and set a troubling precedent for the governance of all Olympic sports in the U.S.

WHY THIS MATTERS.

Federal law and the Olympic Charter are designed to ensure that each sport in the United States is governed by a steward and expert organization with deep ties to its community and athletes. This structure safeguards fair play, athlete development, and accountability.

Federal Law Prohibits Governing Multiple Sports. The Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act specifically forbids any NGB from overseeing more than one Olympic sport or representing multiple international federations. Because USSS is already the designated NGB for skiing and snowboarding through its affiliation with the International Ski Federation (FIS), it is legally barred from taking over governance of surfing.

Recognition by the Proper International Federation Is Mandatory. USOPC bylaws require every NGB to be recognized by the international federation for its sport. Only USA Surfing holds International Surfing Association (ISA) recognition, making it the sole qualified NGB for Olympic surfing. If the USOPC installs USSS as NGB, the ISA will almost certainly reject its nominations—shutting Team USA out of Olympic surfing at LA28. Even if accepted, every U.S. Olympic surfer risks their LA28 medals being stripped away due to Olympic Charter non-compliance.

Stewardship of the Sport and Athlete Development Are at Stake. The Olympic Charter and U.S. policy require every NGB to actively steward, develop, and protect all disciplines recognized by the ISA—including shortboard, longboard, SUP, and para surfing. Effective governance depends on real expertise and commitment to every stage of athlete development. Manipulating rules and NGB definitions for the benefit of an unqualified and unrecognized organization jeopardizes athlete opportunities, Olympic participation, and the sport's long-term health in the United States.

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LEGISLATIVE ACTION.

Demand USOPC Compliance with Law and Policy. Congress should insist that the USOPC halt any action that would grant commercial rights and oversight of Olympic surfing to an organization not exclusively dedicated to stewarding the sport of U.S. surfing and its athletes for all ISA surf disciplines, including para surfers.

Protect Athletes’ Rights and Sport Integrity. Ensure that the leadership and future of U.S. surfing remain with those recognized by the sport’s international federation, the ISA, and who are committed to supporting U.S. athletes at every level - that is unequivocally USA Surfing.

Reject USSS’s proposal to divorce the top Olympic surfers from the rest of the talent development pipeline, funnel Olympic commercial opportunities away surfers and the surfing community, and risk Team USA being barred from Olympic Surfing on their home turf and the sport’s epicenter in mainland U.S. at the LA28 Olympics.

Stand up for fair governance and preserve the future of American surfing.

USA SURFING	U.S. SKI & SNOWBOARD
 Recognized by International Surfing Association (ISA)	 Recognized by International Ski & Snowboard Federation (FIS)
 Decades Exclusively Dedicated to One Sport, Surfing	 Overseeing 10 Winter Snow Sports, No Surfing Expertise
 Eligible by Law and Olympic Guidelines	 Ineligible by Law and Olympic Guidelines, Disqualified for LA28
 NGB Bid Supported by ISA, WSL, SIMA, & Olympic Surfers	 No Named Surfers Support NGB Bid
 ISA Eligible to Nominate Surfers for LA28 Games	 ISA Ineligible, Risk U.S. Surfers Barred from LA28 Games

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