

Roma Torre Calls Foul on Exclusion from NY1's World Cup Parade Coverage, Says It's 'Retaliation' For Lawsuit

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When the U.S. Women's National Team won the World Cup in 2015, two-time Emmy-winning anchor Roma Torre was the host of then-Time Warner Cable NY1's ticker-tape parade coverage. This year, however, she says she's being excluded from covering the parade due to "retaliation" for an age and gender discrimination lawsuit she and four other longtime NY1 anchors filed against new owners Charter Communications.

Last month Torre and fellow NY1 anchors Amanda Farinacci, Vivian Lee, Jeanine Ramirez and Kristen Shaughnessy filed suit against Charter, accusing the company of reducing their on-air time in favor of grooming younger women and men to replace them. The anchors range in age from 40 to 61. The suit specifically calls attention to five women the plaintiffs feel are "younger" versions of themselves, mirroring their ethnic backgrounds and general appearances.

The suit also alleges that female anchors are being paid less than their male colleagues. Torre claims she makes "less than half" of what anchor Pat Kiernan makes, although she has been on the air 25 years to his 20.

In a statement, Charter spokesperson Maureen Huff said, "We take these allegations seriously and as we complete our thorough review, we have not found any merit to them. NY1 is a respectful and fair workplace and we're committed to providing a work environment in which all our employees are valued and empowered."

Specifically, regarding Torre, Huff said the 61-year-old anchor has remained the face of NY1's live noon broadcast and continues to have her theater reviews shown regularly on the channel.

In an open letter to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio posted to Medium on July 9, Torre said NY1 informed her she would not be involved in the World Cup parade live coverage in spite of her request to continue in that role. "Of course, this is retaliation and a further demonstration of NY1's complete failure to take women's issues seriously," she wrote.

She pointed to a changed culture since Charter took over NY1 in 2016 and urged the mayor to support her and her fellow anchors by "condemn[ing] NY1's actions in the strongest terms."

“When New Yorkers line the streets tomorrow,” she wrote, “it is my hope that they not only celebrate U.S. women’s soccer but also, as they watch the blank pieces of ticker tape fall from the sky, think about the millions of faceless women who suffer in silence at the hands of sexual harassment, gender discrimination and unequal pay. We need to do more. It is time to turn the conversation into action.”

Torre also stressed that she did not intend her statement to detract from the accomplishment of the U.S. Women’s National Team. “Quite to the contrary, I write this letter to congratulate them for their professional success and celebrate them for their willingness to speak up and speak out about the importance of advancing women’s rights.”