

**OLYMPIC ABUSE:
THE ROLE OF NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES
IN PROTECTING OUR ATHLETES**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION,
PRODUCT SAFETY, INSURANCE,
AND DATA SECURITY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

APRIL 18, 2018

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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**OLYMPIC ABUSE:
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IN PROTECTING OUR ATHLETES**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2018

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, PRODUCT
SAFETY, INSURANCE, AND DATA SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:37 p.m. in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Jerry Moran, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senators Moran [presiding], Blumenthal, Thune, Capito, Klobuchar, Peters, Hassan, and Cortez Masto.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JERRY MORAN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM KANSAS**

Senator MORAN. Good afternoon, everyone, colleagues and witnesses and our visitors.

I call this hearing to order and will keep my opening remarks very brief because it's so important today that we hear from those witnesses who have powerful stories that will resonate with each of us.

To our witnesses, I've met most of you. I will look forward to having a conversation with you afterwards, if that's desirable, but thank you for being here today to share your experiences with the Subcommittee.

I speak for all of us when I say that we're grateful for your representation of the United States of America, that you did so well, and that you've done so many things good even outside your sport. We appreciate your willingness to spend your afternoon with us and discussing ways that we can better protect our athletes.

I believe we all wish to see Americans successful in international competitions and I understand the value of encouraging young athletes to participate in our nation's thriving sports culture.

This Subcommittee, which exercises jurisdiction over the U.S. Olympic Committee and Amateur Sports, is fully committed to ensuring the health and safety of all American athletes from youth sports to Olympians.

In January, Senator Blumenthal and I launched a bipartisan subcommittee investigation to examine cultural and systemic problems regarding abuse after serious and disturbing revelations that former USA Gymnastics Team Dr. Larry Nassar sexually abused

hundreds of athletes over two decades, even well after survivors alerted authorities about his actions.

Together, we have sought extensive documentation from the U.S. Olympic Committee, from USA Gymnastics, and from Michigan State University regarding this specific case.

To further expand the investigation, we requested written documentation from all national governing bodies on their policies and procedures and reporting, handling, and combating abuse and their use of athlete organization non-disclosure agreements.

Today's hearing represents the next step in our investigation. The Ranking Member and I met with several athletes earlier this year, including two of our witnesses here today, and we felt it was absolutely necessary to have your experiences shared with the subcommittee.

I'm also eager to hear our witnesses' advice and recommendations on what Congress ought to be doing to make certain athletes are protected from predators and can freely participate in their sport without fear of abuse.

I appreciate the incredible bravery of our witnesses and their willingness to be here to discuss these sensitive topics. You all are enormously talented and successful athletes who made your country proud but were taken for granted by the organizations you represented. You were let down by individuals whom you trusted but who chose to ignore you, to look the other way or to deliberately cover up the abuses you suffered because their priority, simply put, was not your safety or your well-being.

Thank you for your time that you've taken to prepare and to present your testimony today and, finally, while she's not here today, another abuse survivor, McKayla Maroney, has submitted written testimony to the subcommittee.

Ms. Maroney, as many of you know, is another Olympic gold medal-winning gymnast abused by Larry Nassar and whom was alleged to have been silenced from speaking out by USA Gymnastics through an NDA.

I ask unanimous consent that her testimony be entered into the record.

Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Maroney follows:]

April 18, 2018

Senator JERRY MORAN,
Chairman,
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection,
Product Safety, Insurance, and Data
Security,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Senator RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection,
Product Safety, Insurance, and Data
Security,
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation,
United States Senate,
Washington, DC.

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Blumenthal,

For as long as I can remember, gymnastics was my life. As a child, my mom said, "I need to put this child in gymnastics, to tire her out." You could say I was in gymnastics since the age of 18 months. I've always felt comfortable in the gym, sort of my home away from home.

I was 7 years old for my first competition. I remember getting ready for the meet. I got my hair braided with a cool bow, and some sparkles. I got to wear this really

awesome leotard and wore a matching warm-up. Life was good, I looked good . . . and I was pretty certain that one day I'd be heading off to the Olympics!

The Olympics is something that brings people hope and joy. It inspires people to fight for their dreams, because anything is possible with hard-work and dedication. I remember watching the 2004 Olympics. I was 8 years old, and I told myself that one day I would wear that red, white, and blue leotard, and compete for my country. Sure, from the outside looking in, it's a remarkable and amazing story. I did it. I got there, but not without a price.

I made the U.S. National Team at the age of 14 and began to compete throughout the world for my country. When I first met Larry Nassar, he was the doctor for our National Team and our Olympic team. I was told to trust him, that he would treat my injuries and make it possible for me to achieve my Olympic dreams. Dr. Nassar told me that I was receiving "medically necessary treatment that he had been performing on patients for over 30 years."

As it turns out, much to my demise, Dr. Nassar was not a doctor, he in fact is, was, and forever shall be, a child molester, and a monster of a human being. End of story! He abused my trust, he abused my body and he left scars on my psyche that may never go away.

It all started when I was 13 or 14 years old, at one of my first National Team training camps, in Texas, and it didn't end until I left the sport. It seemed whenever and wherever this man could find the chance, I was "treated." It happened in London before my team and I won the gold medal, and it happened before I won my Silver Medal. For me, the scariest night of my life happened when I was 15 years old. I had flown all day and night with the team to get to Tokyo. He'd given me a sleeping pill for the flight, and the next thing I know, I was all alone with him in his hotel room getting a "treatment." I thought I was going to die that night.

Because the National Team training camps did not allow parents to be present, my mom and dad were unable to observe what Nassar was doing, and this has imposed a terrible and undeserved burden of guilt on my loving family.

Larry Nassar deserves to spend the rest of his life in prison. Not only because of what he did to me, my teammates and so many other little girls—He needs to be behind bars so he will never prey upon another child. I urge you to impose the maximum sentence upon him.

Ever since I went public with my story, I have been inspired and uplifted by the love and support of my former teammates, fans and many other good people.

People should know that sexual abuse of children is not just happening in Hollywood, in the media or in the halls of Congress. This is happening everywhere. Wherever there is a position of power, there seems to be potential for abuse. I had a dream to go to the Olympics, and the things that I had to endure to get there, were unnecessary, and disgusting.

I was deeply saddened by the stories of my fellow Olympic teammates that suffered as I did at the hands of Larry Nassar. More than 140 women and girls had to say, "#MeToo" to Nassar's sexual assaults and hundreds more were victimized to create the pornographic images that fueled his evil desires.

A question that has been asked over and over is: How could have Larry Nassar been allowed to assault so many women and girls for more than two decades?

The answer to that question lies in the failure of not one, but three major institutions to stop him—Michigan State University, USA Gymnastics and the United States Olympic Committee.

When my story became public the U.S. Olympic Committee said, "Each doctor working with our athletes undergoes background checks including an evaluation of medical licensure actions. Unfortunately, this predator was not identified by any organization during the time in question."

Reports in the Nation's leading newspapers and media outlets document credible claims that Michigan State University trainers and coaches received complaints about Nassar going back to the late 1990s. These complaints were ignored.

Nassar was not even licensed to practice medicine in Texas, yet he "treated" and abused girls at the Karolyi Ranch Olympic Training Center in Huntsville, Texas for more than 15 years.

In 2014, Nassar was the subject of a Michigan State University investigation based on additional complaints of sexual misconduct. This botched investigation concluded that Nassar's actions, which he has now admitted were sexual assaults, were legitimate medical treatments. He was allowed to go back to work at Michigan State University and continue molesting girls. USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Olympic Committee were never informed of this investigation.

When other Olympic and National Team athletes complained to USA Gymnastics about Larry Nassar in 2015 he was allowed to retire as the Olympic Team doctor and Michigan State University was never informed of the complaints against him.

He returned to Michigan State University and allegedly continued to molest young girls until he was finally arrested nearly a year later.

A simple fact is this. If Michigan State University, USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Olympic Committee had paid attention to any of the red flags in Larry Nassar's behavior I never would have met him, I never would have been "treated" by him, and I never would have been abused by him.

It is my hope that Federal and state law enforcement agencies will not close the book on the Larry Nassar scandal after he receives his just punishment. It is time to hold the leadership of Michigan State University, USA Gymnastics and the United States Olympic Committee accountable for allowing, and in some cases enabling, his crimes.

Our silence has given the wrong people power for too long, and it's time to take our power back.

Thank you,

MCKAYLA MARONEY.

Senator MORAN. With that, I now turn to the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, Senator Blumenthal, for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT**

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you. The faces and voices that we're going to see and hear today give new meaning to the word "courage" and "sacrifice."

A year and a half ago, you stepped forward, along with others, to give those faces and voices to a cause which continues to shock us and to sadden the Nation. There's very little these days that seems to shock this nation, but your experiences and others that have been recounted now still elicit that emotion.

Fortunately, the survivors of abuse across Olympic sports deserve our thanks and if I have one message for the folks who are testifying today, it is the gratitude of our nation, our Senate, our committee, for coming forward and continuing to be part of this effort at reform, and it has to be a continuing crusade.

This hearing is just one more step. I want to thank Chairman Moran and the Chairman of our Committee, Senator Thune, as well as the Ranking Member, Senator Nelson, for giving us this authority and platform to move forward.

How was this abuse allowed to continue over so many years? What systematically allowed it to happen? How can we prevent it from happening to any athlete again, not only in gymnastics but now, as we're learning, in other sports where young people can be victimized by predators who have so shocked the nation?

A number of young athletes in your position felt that speaking out would mean the end of their careers, their reputations, and their opportunity for athletic glory, particularly Olympic glory. Some were discouraged or told they couldn't be helped. Circumstances reached a level that even elite athletes suffering abuse were afraid to speak out. How do we create a system that encourages truth-telling, speaking truth to power rather than hiding it?

Two of those courageous voices are here today, Olympic Medalists Jordyn Wieber and Jamie Dantzscher. Ms. Wieber is a 2012 Gold Medalist and a member of what the media dubbed the "Fierce Five." Ms. Dantzscher is a 2000 Bronze Medalist.

These awards are distinctions, athletic distinctions for ability and perseverance and hard work, but they deserve medals for cour-

age and stamina in speaking out and standing up and their courage in testifying numerous times, not just here.

I'd like to thank McKayla Maroney, as well. She's a 2012 Gold Medalist and a member of the Fierce Five for her courage in submitting her written testimony for the official record. Her experience also points to systematic problems that need to be addressed because they will enable continued abuse.

I want to say very bluntly of particular concern to me are the reports that the USAG actively sought to silence Ms. Maroney with a nondisclosure agreement in response to a lawsuit she filed against the U.S. Olympic Committee, USA Gymnastics, and Michigan State University.

There, multiple organizational failures to properly investigate, discipline, or remove abusers after complaints of sexual abuse are absolutely unconscionable. This non-disclosure agreement shows the hazards and dangers and damage that can be caused by those kinds of enforced concealment agreements. It would impose a \$100,000 fine if the victim were to violate its confidentiality clause by speaking out about the sexual abuse.

As Chairman Moran has mentioned, as we continue this investigation, we're seeking answers about Ms. Maroney's story and others that have been silenced.

So let me just say finally across Olympic sports, there are stories of young athletes who have been victimized and have survived physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. It's an undeniable reality. We want to fight it and correct it and prevent it from happening again.

And again my thanks to Chairman Moran and Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson and, most important, thank you to the survivors for your incredible courage in sharing your experiences and your stories and supporting others who have done so, as well.

Thank you.

Senator MORAN. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

A couple of observations. First of all, there's a vote now scheduled at 4:30, and we would hope to have our hearing concluded by the time of that vote.

Second, Senator Blumenthal is correct. This is an ongoing investigation. I would make my fellow committee members aware, as well as others, that we have identified May 22 as our next hearing date.

We are in the process of inviting but to date we have notified the USA Gymnastics as well as the United States Olympic Committee and Michigan State of our intention to have a hearing that would involve their participation as witnesses on that date. It is a work in progress but it is one of the next steps that the Subcommittee intends to take.

With that, let me introduce, although the Ranking Member did an admirable job introducing our witnesses, our witnesses today are Ms. Jordyn Wieber, a Gymnast and Olympic Gold Medalist from 2012, London; Ms. Jamie Dantzscher, Gymnast and Olympic Bronze Medalist, Sydney, in 2000; Ms. Bridie Farrell, a Speed Skater in 2014, Olympic Hopeful; and Mr. Craig Maurizi, a Figure Skater.

With that, we'll take your testimony of approximately five minutes, and if there are things that you want to add to the record, we'd be glad to have additional comments in writing.

Ms. Dantzscher.

**STATEMENT OF JAMIE DANTZSCHER, GYMNAST
AND OLYMPIC BRONZE MEDALIST**

Ms. DANTZSCHER. Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal, distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today.

One year ago, I testified in front of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee in support of legislation to protect child athletes from sexual abuse in gymnastics and other Olympic sports. That legislation is now law and I want to thank all of the Members of Congress and both parties who voted for it.

I was the first Olympic athlete to come forward publicly and reveal Nassar's long history of abuse and, sadly, I was not the last. We now know that for the 2012 Fierce Five gold medal gymnasts are Nassar survivors, including my sister survivor Jordyn Wieber.

I let the world know that the former Olympic Team Dr. Nassar abused me at the USA National Training Center in Texas. He abused me in California and during gymnastics competitions all over the world. He even abused me in my hotel room in Sydney at the Olympic Games.

I now understand that through all of that time, USA Gymnastics had policies that prohibited adults from being alone in hotel rooms of children but they didn't enforce the policies.

I knew at that time that speaking out would not be easy or painless. Back in 2000 as a teenager, I had the audacity to speak out against the abusive training methods employed by Bela and Martha Karolyi and I suffered criticism from USA Gymnastics staff, coaches and the media.

I believe that speaking out was my right. I believe that this abuse was allowed to happen because many adults at USA Gymnastics, the United States Olympic Committee, Michigan State University, and in various gyms throughout the country kept Larry Nassar's secret. They failed to speak up and they let Nassar assault children.

I have numerous nieces and nephews. I could not look at them any longer and stay quiet. I knew as a former Olympian that if I spoke, people might be more likely to speak up, as well. As it turned out, I was right.

In the summer of 2016, I began to understand that Larry Nassar had sexually abused me and his procedures were not legitimate medical treatment. I further came to learn that he had been quietly dismissed by USA Gymnastics based upon allegations that he had sexually abused minors on our Olympic and National Women's Gymnastics Teams. His firing was kept quiet by USA Gymnastics and he was allowed to post messages on social media that he said he had retired.

I decided to seek justice not just for myself but to protect others. Initially, I filed a lawsuit as a Jane Doe but I did give an interview to the *Indianapolis Star* when my case was filed. Almost immediately after filing, I was bullied on social media. My name was put

on various social media sites by Nassar supporters who were either told or figured out my identity.

A senior USAG official actually sent me a Facebook petition she was circulating to support Larry Nassar. Others attacked me personally, questioning my motives, my character, my morals, and even my sanity. Attorneys working for USA Gymnastics called former boyfriends and tried to dig up dirt on me, asking very personal and detailed questions about my sex life. They blamed my parents and generally attacked my character.

This upset me greatly. I had done nothing wrong, except speak the truth about what happened to me as a little girl. Their response was to blame the victim.

USA Gymnastics put out an immediate statement about my lawsuit. They said they found out about Dr. Nassar's misconduct in 2015 and immediately contacted law enforcement. A few months later, we found out that that was a lie.

USA Gymnastics has now admitted that they waited more than 5 weeks before contacting the FBI and the FBI waited a year before contacting any of the survivors or their families.

During that time, Larry Nassar went back to his clinic at MSU and continued to molest children. I began to learn that I was not alone. Almost immediately, other girls and women began to come forward with stories disturbingly similar to mine.

I learned through the media that there were dozens, if not hundreds of victims. Today, more than 250 women have already come forward in court and to law enforcement. All have told stories that are disturbingly similar to mine.

Larry Nassar was convicted criminally, first on Federal charges for child pornography, then on state charges for criminal sexual conduct. He has been sentenced to 300 years in prison.

USA Gymnastics has also been to court attempting to dismiss claims by more than 200 women by contending that they had no legal duty to prevent Nassar's abuse or tell us that he was an abuser.

I sat through the depositions of USA Gymnastics President Steve Penny and other USAG officials. I was stunned by the way their lawyers fought to prevent them from answering any meaningful questions about what they knew and when they knew it. I was disgusted by their answers when they did answer questions. Their answers were either misleading or attempted to justify their misconduct.

I urge the Committee to read these depositions and question Mr. Penny and other USAG officials under oath. Maybe they will answer tough questions and tell you the truth. I hope they do.

This is a case of powerful people protecting other powerful people. It is up to you as powerful members of the U.S. Senate to hold them accountable and I believe you will.

Thank you for listening to all of us.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Dantzscher follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMIE DANTZSCHER, GYMNAST
AND OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST

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I let the world know that the former Olympic Team doctor Nassar abused me at the USA National Training Center in Texas, he abused me in California and during gymnastics competitions all over the world. Worst of all, he abused me in my hotel room in Sydney at the Olympic Games.

I now understand that through all of that time USA Gymnastics had policies that prohibited adults from being alone in hotel rooms with children but they didn't enforce the policies.

I knew at the time that speaking out would not be easy or painless. Back in 2000, as a teenager I had the audacity to speak out against the abusive training methods employed by Bela and Marta Karolyi and suffered criticism from USAG staff, coaches and the media.

I believed that speaking out was my right. I believed that this abuse was allowed to happen because many adults at USA Gymnastics, the United States Olympic Committee, Michigan State University and in various gyms throughout the country kept Larry Nassar's secret. They failed to speak up and let Nassar assault children.

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Attorneys working for USA Gymnastics called former boyfriends and tried to dig up dirt on me, asking very personal and detailed questions about my sex life. They blamed my parents and generally attacked my character. This upset me greatly. I had done nothing wrong except speak the truth about what happened to me as a little girl. Their response was to blame the victim.

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USA Gymnastics has also been to court, attempting to dismiss claims by more than 200 women by contending that they had no legal duty to prevent Nassar's abuse or tell us that he was an abuser.

I sat through the depositions of former USA Gymnastics Chairman Paul Parrilla and former President Steve Penny. I was stunned by the way their lawyers fought to prevent them from answering any meaningful questions about what they knew and when they knew it. I was disgusted by their answers when they did answer questions. Their answers were either misleading or attempted to justify their mis-

conduct. I urge the Committee to read these depositions and question Mr. Parrilla and Mr. Penny under oath. Maybe they will answer tough questions and tell you the truth. I hope they do.

This is a case of powerful people protecting other powerful people. It is up to you, as powerful members of the United States Senate to hold them accountable and I believe you will.

Thank you for listening to all of us.

Senator MORAN. Thank you very much for your comments and your testimony.

Ms. Wieber.

**STATEMENT OF JORDYN WIEBER, GYMNAST
AND OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST**

Ms. WIEBER. Good afternoon, Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I thought that training for the Olympics would be the hardest thing I would ever do, but, in fact, the hardest thing I've had to do is process that I'm a victim of Larry Nassar.

It has caused me to feel shame and confusion. I spent months trying to think back on my experience and wonder how I didn't know what was happening to me and how I was betrayed by Larry Nassar and everyone at USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Olympic Committee, organizations sanctioned by the Federal Government whom I trusted to be on my side.

I started seeing Larry Nassar at the age of eight years old in my hometown of Lansing. He was the best gymnastics doctor in the world. Everyone at my gymnastics club, on the U.S. National Team, and across the country saw Larry and everyone said the same thing. He was a miracle worker and he could fix just about anything.

I was treated by Larry for any and all of my injuries from ages eight to 18, and it wasn't long before he had gained my trust. He became a safe person of sorts. To my teenage self, he appeared to be the good guy in an environment that was intense and restricting. He would try to advise me on how to deal with the stresses of training and my coaches.

At the Karyoli Ranch, the National Team Training Center, our Olympic team athletes were motivated by fear, fear of being treated as invisible if you didn't perform to their standards. We couldn't smile or laugh during training. We were even afraid to eat too much in front of our coaches who were pressured to keep us thin, even though we were doing extremely rigorous exercise for up to 35 hours a week.

Bear in mind, this is happening to little girls as young as 9 years old. This toxic environment was the perfect place for a predator like Larry Nassar to flourish and he did.

Larry acted like our friend. He always had a sympathetic ear for complaints about our coaches. He would bring us food and coffee at the Olympics when we were hungry. I didn't know that these were all grooming techniques that he used to manipulate and brainwash me into trusting him.

When I was 14 years old, I tore my hamstring in my right leg. This was when he started performing the procedure that we're all now familiar with. I would cringe at how uncomfortable it felt. He

did it time after time, appointment after appointment, convincing me that it was helping my hamstring injury.

The worst part was that I had no idea he was sexually abusing me for his own benefit. I knew that it felt strange but, after all, he was the National Team doctor. I knew that if I questioned his treatment, I would risk my chance at making the Olympic team or being chosen to compete internationally. After all, Larry was recommended by the National Team staff and he treated us monthly at all of our National Team camps.

I had even talked to my teammates Aly Raisman and McKayla Maroney about the treatment and how uncomfortable it made us feel. None of us could quite understand it.

After I made the Olympic team, I suffered a stress fracture in my right shin. It was extremely painful to tumble and land with my legs but I fought through the pain because it was the Olympics and I knew it would be my only shot. Our bodies were all hanging by a thread in London and who was the doctor that USAG sent with us to keep us healthy and help us get through? The doctor that was our abuser and a child molester.

To this day, I still don't know how he could have been allowed to do this for so long. We now know he abused my sister survivor and fellow Olympian Jamie Dantzscher 20 years ago. Women at Michigan State University reported his abuse even earlier and they were silenced and ignored. If these institutions had done their job, none of us would be sitting here today.

My teammates and I were subjected to his medical care every single month at the Karyoli Ranch in Texas. He was the only male allowed to be present in the athlete dorm rooms to do whatever treatments he wanted. He was allowed to treat us in our hotel rooms alone and without any supervision. He took photos of us during training and whenever else he wanted to. Nobody was protecting us from being taken advantage of. No one was even concerned whether or not we were being sexually abused. Me and my teammates were not protected.

My parents trusted USA Gymnastics and Larry Nassar to take care of me and we were betrayed by both. Now the lack of accountability from USAG, USOC, and Michigan State have caused me and many other girls to remain shameful, confused, and disappointed.

I am an Olympian. Despite being abused, I worked so hard and was able to achieve my goal, but I want everyone to know that I'm one of over 250 women and survivors whose story is just as important. Our pain is all the same and our stories are all important.

The people and organizations who are responsible need to accept responsibility for the pain they've caused me and my sister survivors. Larry Nassar has received his punishment and he'll never see the outside of a prison cell again. Now it's up to Congress to hold those people and institutions accountable who enabled Larry Nassar and attempted to cover up his terrible crimes.

USA Gymnastics, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and MSU must all be held accountable. My teammates and sister survivors have been through too much. No one should ever have to endure physical, emotional, or sexual abuse for the privilege of representing our country as athletes. Now it's time for a change because the current

and future athletes don't deserve to live in anxiety, fear, or be unprotected like we were.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wieber follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JORDYN WIEBER, GYMNAST AND OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST

Good afternoon Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal and members of the Committee. Thank for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I thought that training for the Olympics would be the hardest thing I would ever do. But in fact, the hardest thing I've had to do is process that I am a victim of Larry Nassar. It has caused me to feel shame and confusion. I spent months trying to think back on my experience and wonder how I didn't know what was happening to me and how I was betrayed by Larry Nassar and everyone at USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Olympic Committee—organizations sanctioned by the Federal government whom I trusted to be on MY side.

I started seeing Larry Nassar at the age of 8, in my hometown of Lansing. He was the best gymnastics doctor in the world. Everyone at my club, on the U.S. National team, and across the country saw Larry and everyone said the same thing. He was a miracle worker and he could fix anything. I was treated by Larry for any and all of my injuries from ages 8 to 18. It wasn't long before he had gained my trust. He became a safe person of sorts. To my teenage self, he appeared to be the "good guy" in an environment that was intense and restricting. He would try to advise me on how to deal with the stresses of training and my coaches.

At the Karyoli Ranch National Training Center our Olympic and national team athletes were motivated by fear. Fear of being treated as invisible if you didn't perform to their standards. We couldn't smile or laugh during training. We were even afraid to eat too much in front of our coaches who were pressured to keep us thin even though we were doing extremely rigorous exercise for up to 35 hours per week.

Bear in mind, this was happening to little girls as young as 9. This toxic environment was the perfect place for a predator like Larry Nassar to flourish . . . and he did.

Larry acted like our friend. He always had a sympathetic ear for complaints about our coaches. He would bring us food, candy and coffee at the Olympics when we were hungry. I didn't know that these were all grooming techniques that he used to manipulate and brainwash me into trusting him.

When I was 14 years old, I tore my hamstring in my right leg. This was when he started performing the procedure that we are all now familiar with. I would cringe at how uncomfortable it felt. He did it time after time, appointment after appointment, convincing me that it was helping my hamstring injury. The worst part was that I had NO idea that he was sexually abusing me for his own benefit. I knew it felt strange, but he was the national team doctor.

I knew that if I questioned his treatment I risked my chance at making the Olympic team or being chosen to compete internationally. After all, Larry was recommended by the national team staff and he treated us monthly at all of our national team camps. I had even talked to my teammates Aly Raisman and McKayla Maroney about the treatment and how uncomfortable it made us feel. None of us could understand it.

After I made the Olympic team, I suffered a stress fracture in my right shin. It was extremely painful to tumble and land using my legs, but I fought through the pain because it was the Olympics and I knew it might be my only shot. Our bodies were all hanging by a thread in London. Who was the doctor that USAG sent with us to keep us healthy and help us get through? The doctor that was our abuser. The doctor that is a child molester.

To this day, I still don't know how he could have been allowed to do this for so long? We now know he abused my sister survivor and fellow Olympian Jamie Dantzscher twenty years ago. Women at Michigan State University reported his abuse even earlier and they were silenced and ignored. If these institutions had done their job, neither of us would be sitting here today.

My teammates and I were subjected to his medical care *every single month* at the Karolyi Ranch in Texas. He was the only male allowed to be present in the athlete dorm rooms to do whatever treatments he wanted. He was allowed to treat us in hotel rooms alone and without any supervision. He took photos of us during training and whenever else he wanted. *Nobody* was protecting us from being taken advantage of. *Nobody* was even concerned whether or not we were being sexually abused. I was not protected. My teammates were not protected. My parents trusted USA gymnastics and Larry Nassar to take care of me and we were betrayed by both. And

now, the lack of accountability from USAG, USOC, and Michigan State University, have caused me and many other girls to remain shameful, confused, and disappointed.

I'm an Olympian. Despite being abused, I worked so hard and was able to achieve my goal. But I want everyone to know that I am one of over 250 women and survivors whose story is just as important. Our pain is all the same. And our stories are all important.

The people and organizations who are responsible need to accept responsibility for the pain they caused me and my sister survivors. Larry Nassar has received his punishment. He will never see the outside of a prison cell again.

Now it is up to Congress to hold those people and institutions accountable who enabled Larry Nassar and attempted to cover up his terrible crimes.

USA Gymnastics must be held accountable. The U.S. Olympic committee must be held accountable. MSU must be held accountable.

My teammates and sister survivors have been through too much. No one should ever have to endure physical, emotional or sexual abuse for the privilege of representing our country as athletes. Now, it's time for change, because the current and future athletes do not deserve to live in anxiety, fear, or be unprotected like I was.

Thank you.

Senator MORAN. Ms. Farrell.

**STATEMENT OF BRIDIE FARRELL, SPEED SKATER
AND 2014 OLYMPIC HOPEFUL**

Ms. FARRELL. Thank you for the invitation to testify today and thank you to everyone in the room for being here.

As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse during my competitive years as a speed skater, I'm here to speak truth to the negligence and at times exploitation of children as well as to discuss ideas to create safer sport environments for current and future children through balanced, purposeful, and effective policies, to the best of my ability.

My name is Bridie Farrell. I earned a B.S. from Cornell University in Policy Analysis and Management. I'm Co-founder and CEO of New York Loves Kids and I currently live in Brooklyn, New York.

In 1998-99, my parents enrolled my brother Patrick and I in speed skating with the Saratoga Winter Club. I was six years old, smiling, and loving everything about racing fast. Ironically, my reasons for being here today began around the same time.

By April 1990, Northern Michigan University's Human Resources Department and Public Safety Department, the United States Olympic Committee via the United States Olympic Education Center, members of the United States Speedskating Team, and members of USA Boxing knew of the sexual misconduct of resident athlete, coach, and employee at Northern Michigan University, Andy Gabel.

Documents obtained by a FOIA request that are attached to the testimony that I handed in reveal both the inadequate investigation and a very successful cover-up.

An individual within the boxing community witnessed a 14-year-old female, we'll call Jane Doe, entering and exiting Andy Gabel's room at Nalen Hall at Northern Michigan University on numerous occasions. Andy Gabel was about 24 or 25 at the time.

The botched investigation has no record of interviewing Jane Doe nor interviewing Andy Gabel, who are the people concerned with the investigation. There's also no documentation of contacting the parents of Jane Doe. Numerous adults, all men, were made aware

of criminal situation, and no one alerted the parents of a 14-year-old child.

I will highlight a few sections of the official reports now as well as include them in my testimony. Exhibit A. This is a quote from the report, "We also felt that it was needed to be aware of both parties' rights in this matter." Written by the leading investigator on the case, which (1) shows the severity of the claims and acknowledges the rights of both parties. However, the municipality police department was never contacted. Thus, they did not take seriously the situation that they acknowledged and, second, acknowledging the rights of both parties, Jane Doe was never interviewed or contacted again nor her parents. It certainly reads that the parties deserving equal rights are the institution and the male abuser.

The next excerpt states that Mr. Love, who's an adult within USA Boxing, sees Jane Doe leaving Andy Gabel's room late at night in sleeping clothes with a blanket and crying. Andy Gabel's explanation of the incident is that he had just informed Jane Doe they're ending seeing each other. Basic logic backs this up. Only one step to realize that they were seeing each other. He was 24 or 25 and she was 14.

A conversation between Speedskater Charles King and Mr. Moore, who was involved with the investigation, documents more the inappropriate and illegal sexual relationship that Gabel was involved in. King allegedly told Mr. Moore on January 1990 that Gabel and Jane Doe went into the room while King was there, that they were in bed together and that it was obvious that they had sex.

And then the conclusion of the report reads, "Due to the fact that none of the allegations concerning sexual relations between Gabel and Jane Doe could be substantiated, there's no further action to take by this department. Signed Victor J. Lauria, Investigator, Northern Michigan University Public Safety." And this is where the story of Andy Gabel and sports should end.

Let me confirm what you're already afraid to hear and that his career did not end here. Andy Gabel went on competing through 1998. He then became involved with the Salt Lake Olympic Committee, the President of the USA Speedskating while I was still an athlete, and, finally, Chairman of the ISU when he finally resigned in 2013. The sexual predator remained in speed skating for over 30 years after his behavior was identified.

My story is on February 28, 2013, I confidently sat in the Lake Effect Recording Studio in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with Ms. Tyke to record my first disclosure on child sexual abuse at the hands and ego of Andy Gabel. I was sexually abused at 15 by my 33-year-old teammate in his house in Saratoga Springs. I was molested on a blanket he laid out at the Saratoga National Battlefield. I was molested in Saratoga Springs Spa State Park. I was molested at ice rinks. I was molested in restaurant parking lots. I was sexually abused on the grounds of the United States Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid, New York. I was sexually abused in my high school parking lot. I was sexually abused in the back hallway of my parents' house. I was molested in the driveway after early ice training before the sun had even come up.

The man who molested me perfected the deceitful art of grooming. He established trust with my family. He saw my father for his doctor. He sought out piano lessons from my mom, and he drove me to and from training, always saying hello to my siblings and parents with a smile. He used his college degree to further con my parents of his positive role in my very impressionable life.

I briefly want to touch on the impact of all this. At 15, I was disposable meat. The known 33-year-old child sexual predator, when he had torn apart all he wanted, he left my picked-over adolescent carcass to decay and rot. My body hurt. It hurt so badly. I screamed, sometimes out loud, sometimes in writing, sometimes into a bottle, and frequently into over-training.

I was about 20 years old when I asked a friend that should I die unexpectedly, to rush to my parents' home and recover my journals. Even a hypothetical death, I was too ashamed to let my parents know I was sexually abused under their purview.

Bouts of depression came and lingered but never left and ultimately I retired from speed skating in December of 2005.

The first time I remember audibly screaming that I wanted to die was in 2006. I was done skating. I was trying to move on from the nightmare and, however, the pain inside me only grew. Over my flip phone, I screamed to my mother I want to die. I was in pain. After graduating from Cornell, I moved to Harlem. Countless mornings, I wanted to jump in front of the oncoming Metro North train.

Ten years, marked 10 years after the physical part of the child sexual abuse ended, I actively still needed to kill the pain. After only one year of living in my Harlem apartment, I had to move because the huge window taunted me to jump. It wasn't the lure of jumping but the knowledge of falling only three stories down to the sidewalk would not end my pain. I had to move.

In 2012, I reached a bottom. My mom sat next to me and as I sobbed in pain, she begged me to tell her how she could help. I was in a chair and she sat near my feet, her head on my knees, and I finally asked from her what I wanted and I asked my own mother to kill me.

In 2013, I returned to speed skating after a seven-year hiatus. I met Claire, a young fearless girl who was the reason I knew to tell my story and I knew telling the truth would be the right thing to do. I knew the insulting New York State laws only opened up me to legal repercussions. I had been through so much pain, and I was still decaying in pain. I decided I would sacrifice for Claire and all the future Claires.

I went public as a survivor of child sexual abuse by known, respected, and honored Andy Gabel. I've grown to be a strong and brave woman, not because of the sexual abuse that I endured, but despite the abuse. Do you think I am brave? Many praise my bravery, our bravery, bravery for retelling our stories, bravery in telling the truth. Please take pause. What do you acknowledge as being brave? Standing up against the man who sexually abused me 20 years ago is brave. Then please recognize the hypocrisy of expecting a child athlete to report sexual abuse while it is still happening.

For many children, it is impossible to disclose molestation or rape because children do not have the vocabulary, which was just said a minute ago. I did not learn that being molested by a 33-year-old man was a crime until I was at Cornell and I was 27 years old. Over 80 percent of child sexual perpetrators know their victim, the child. On average, survivors of child sexual abuse do not disclose until their 40s. One in six boys are victims of child sexual abuse by their eighteenth birthday, one in four girls are victims of child sexual abuse by their eighteenth birthday.

I have three sisters and two brothers. So I am the statistic of one in four.

Can I keep going or should I stop?

Senator MORAN. Please continue.

Ms. FARRELL. OK. I told my story on February 28, 2013. Within days, Andy Gabel released a statement in the *Chicago Tribune* acknowledging the sexual inappropriate relationship that he had.

Then came the following statement from Scott Blackmun. "In sport, as in life, we have a duty to everything we can do to protect children from abuse at the hands of adults," said USOC Chief Executive Scott Blackmun. "We are glad that Ms. Farrell chose to tell her story because it makes others who have been abused aware that they're not alone and hopefully shine a light on the resources that are available to administrators, coaches, parents, and athletes to help protect our young athletes."

However, when I met with Scott Blackmun in 2013, the then-CEO of the USOC, specifically asked that I direct athletes to report to him and not to the media. The USOC would not look into taking Andy Gabel's USA Speedskating membership nor would they look into taking him out of the Hall of Fame. The USOC would not look into preventing Andy Gabel from coaching, not even within speed skating.

Mr. Blackmun only advised I return home to my state of New York and deal with the situation. Mr. Blackmun made it crystal clear there was nothing he nor the USOC could do for me, stating that the USOC did not have such jurisdiction over the national governing bodies.

However, in the midst of the USA Gymnastics shakedown, the USOC acknowledged the NGB could be decertified and overtaken by the head organization. It certainly seems that the USOC wants to pick and choose when to be involved and it only seems to want to be involved when it favors the USOC.

I have spent a large part of the last three to four years working to reform the statute of limitations in New York for child sexual abuse in a bill called The Child Victims Act. This was the impetus for me to launch my organization New York Loves Kids. This time in the political arena has illustrated the need to not just hear both sides of the story but all sides of the story, and I've also learned that the important issues are the ones discussed in hearings.

Again, I would like to thank you for sincerely pondering how best to make sports safer.

The majority of my work is on the state level, but I do have three concrete suggestions. First, there really, really, really needs to be a higher percentage of athletes that are required on the national governing body boards. In my opinion, something closer to 50 per-

cent of athlete voices ought to be heard. Much like I am here today, based on my experience with child sexual abuse, someone with actual speed skating experience should be at the table discussing how the organization moves forward.

Following Suggestion 1, the definition of an athlete ought to be expanded. Even with my competitive experience, I am aged out as being able to run for a position that must be held by an athlete. An older athlete doesn't forget too quickly the sacrifices being made as an athlete. Also, an older individual will bring additional real-world life experience to a position which is a valuable attribute.

And, finally, there is disclosure of sexual abuse. The police have to be notified. How are we still living in an age of the fox guarding the henhouse? In my opinion, I find it to be risky business for the United States Olympic Committee to dabble in adjudicating claims of sexual assault, sexual abuse, or rape.

Rather than trying to protect the image of the organization or trying to maintain sponsors, I believe the USOC should lobby for states to resurrect archaic statutes of limitations on child sex abuse laws from Alabama to Wisconsin, from Oregon to New York.

I just want to make one more comment and it's a question about if the USOC is any better now that Scott Blackmun has stepped down. I just want to point out that a postal worker in Colorado Springs was found with a sack of undelivered letters and he is facing up to five years in prison and he's fined \$250,000.

Scott Blackmun knew that Larry Nassar was a monster. Yet, Scott Blackmun still fed young girls in leotards through a door knowing full well there was a hungry lion on the other side. Over 250 women have come forward. People have died. Families have been torn apart. Lives have been largely ruined. Hundreds of women have PTSD, depression, anxiety, and trust challenges, just to name a few.

The CEO that looks the other way or strategically wears ear muffs is just as much a kingpin in this game as the one committing the crime. Institutions need to be held accountable, survivors need to be acknowledged. Without policy reform, the unjust muzzle will remain bound on children while safeguarding the pedophiles to roam free.

So long as the abusive power continues, the horror in gyms and dojos and fields and courts and pools and tracks and mountains and ice rinks will not end.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Farrell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIDIE FARRELL, SPEED SKATER
AND 2014 OLYMPIC HOPEFUL

Thank you Chairman Thune for the invitation to testify before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation's Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security Subcommittee hearing entitled, "Olympic Abuse: The Role of National Governing Bodies in Protecting Our Athletes". As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse during my competitive years as a speed skater, I am here to speak truth to the negligence, and at times exploitation of children. As well as to discuss ideas to create safer sport environments for current and future children through balanced, purposeful, and effective policy, to the best of my ability.

My name is Bridie Farrell. I hold a bachelor of science in Policy Analysis and Management from Cornell University. I am co-founder and CEO of NY Loves Kids,

Inc. I am 36 years old and reside in Brooklyn, NY with my partner Andrew and dog Lexington.

In 1988/89 my parents enrolled my brother Patrick Farrell and I in speed skating with the Saratoga Winter Club. I was 6, smiling, and loving everything about racing fast. Ironically, my reasons for being here today began around the same time I was just learning to lace up.

Background

By April 1990 Northern Michigan University's Human Resources Department and Public Safety Department, the United States Olympic Committee via the United States Olympic Education Center, members of the U.S. Speed Skating Team, and members of USA Boxing knew of the sexual misconduct of resident athlete, coach, and employee of Northern MI University, Andy Gabel.

Documents obtained by FOIA request, that are attached to this testimony, reveal both an inadequate investigation and a successful cover up.

An individual within the Boxing community witnessed a young, 14 year old, female (Jane Doe) entering and exiting Andy Gabel's dormroom in Mayland Hall at Northern MI University on numerous occasions. Andy Gabel was 24 or 25 at this time. In the botched investigation there is no record of interviewing Jane Doe nor interviewing Andy Gabel. There is also no documentation of contacting the parents of Jane Doe. Numerous adults, all men, were made aware of a criminal situation and no one alerted the parents of the 14 year old child.

I will highlight a few sections now. The entire report is amended to my testimony.

criminal ones to the allegations. He suggested that we schedule a meeting with Mr. John Hamman, Director of N M U Dept. of Human Resources and an attorney. We also felt that we needed to be aware of both parties' rights in this matter.

4:00 PM Wed Oct 11 2000 - Mt. 9 11

A.

The men leading the investigation acknowledged:

1. aware of the severity and
2. acknowledge the rights of both parties.

However the municipal police department is not included in these documents— thus not taking the situation as seriously as they know they should. Secondly, at no point is Jane Doe interviewed or contacted, nor are her parents.

When these men wrote both parties, I can only wish they had spelled out the parties. It certainly reads that the parties that need equal rights are the institution and the male abuser.

B. The report concludes there is insufficient hard evidence. However, please read the statement that is included in the report.

The excerpt below is from the official report and states Lubs who is an adult within USA Boxing sees Jane Doe leaving Andy Gabel's room late at night, in sleeping clothing, with a blanket, and crying.

Why Andy Gabel is asked an explanation word is the he tells her they are ending seeing each other. Basic logic backs up one step to: they were seeing each other.

After checking the person in at the desk LUBS and the Resident Manager were escorting him to his room. While en route he observed Jane Doe coming out of GABEL's room wearing what appeared to be night clothing and carrying a blanket. In addition Jane Doe was crying. LUBS said that this occurred between 0130 and 0200 hours. LUBS said that he later heard that the reason that Jane Doe was crying was because GABEL told her that he wasn't going to have anything more to do with her. (LUBS could not recall who he had heard this from). Complaint#389-90

C. Below is a conversation between speed skater Charles King and Moore who is involved with the investigation. Additional documentation of an inappropriate/illegal sexual relationship.

During the conversation MOORE mentioned that GABEL and C. KING were roommates in Italy. KING allegedly told MOORE (in January of 1990) that GABEL and Jane Doe went into their room while KING was there, that they went to bed together, and it was obvious that they had sex.

COMPLAINT CONTINUED: COMPLAINT #389-90

D. And for additional information on the inappropriate relationship, we have it admitted from Andy Gabel's mouth in the following excerpt.

However MOORE said that on numerous occasions GABEL has told him about how he had gone out on a date with Jane Doe and that she paid for everything.

E. In conclusion:

Due to the fact that none of the allegations concerning sexual relations between GABEL and Jane Doe could be substantiated, there is no further action contemplated by this department.

Victor J. LaDuke
Victor J. LaDuke
Investigator, NMU Public Safety

This is where the story of Andy Gabel in sports should end.

Let me confirm what you're afraid to hear: his career did not end here. Andy Gabel went on competing through 1998. He then became involved with The Salt Lake Olympic Committee, the President of U.S. Speed Skating while I was still an athlete, and finally to the Chairman of the ISU where he resigned in 2013. This sexual predator remained in speed skating for over 30 years after his behavior was identified.

Bridie's Story

On February 28, 2013 I confidently sat in the Lake Effect recording studio in Milwaukee, Wisconsin with Mitch Teich to record my first disclosure on child sexual abuse at the hands and ego of Andy Gabel.

I was sexually abused at 15 by a 33-year-old teammate in his house in Saratoga Springs, NY. I was molested on a blanket he laid out at the Saratoga Springs National Battlefield. I was molested in the Saratoga Springs spa state park. I was molested in ice rinks. I was molested in restaurant parking lots. I was sexually abused on the grounds of the United States Olympic Training Center in Lake Placid, NY. I was sexually abused in my high school parking lot. I was sexually abused in the back hall of my parents' house. I was molested in my driveway after early ice training, before the sun had even come up.

The man who molested me perfected the deceitful art of grooming. He established trust within my family. He saw my father as his doctor. He sought out piano lessons from my mum. He drove me to and from training—always saying hello to my siblings and parents with a smile. He used his college degree to further con my parents of his positive role in my impressionable life.

The man who abused me gave me gifts. He gave me his sponsor issued Oakley sunglasses. He purchased a \$200 ice skate sharpener apparatus called a jig, for me at the 1998 Olympic Trials in Lake Placid.

My strict parents never let us kids drive our wood-paneled family station wagon. The man who conned my parents and abused me, let wide-eyed 15 year old me slip behind the wheel on leather, power seats, and drive his Lexus.

The man who abused me granted me permission to attend my 10th grade High School Homecoming Dance, with agreement to skip every after party and phone when home. Neither family nor friends knew the leash I was on, a leash that got shorter and shorter.

I distinctly recall lying on my side, the pedophile behind me. He pinched my skin below my naval, warning I would have to lose that fat to be a successful athlete. I was 15 and 121 pounds. That message is seared in my memory. For years following his destructive advice I obsessively measured any circumstance on my body—stomach, arms, legs, etc. I had a white string measured with knots, tucked inside a black and white composition notebook, deceptively labeled French.

Impact

At 15, I was the disposable meat of a known 33-year-old child sexual predator. When he had torn apart all he wanted, he left my picked over adolescent carcass to decay and rot. My body hurt; it hurt so badly. I screamed. Sometimes out loud, sometimes in writing, sometimes into a bottle, frequently into overtraining.

When I was about 20 years old, I asked a friend that should I die unexpectedly, to rush to my parents' home and recover my journals. Even after a hypothetical death, I was too ashamed to let my parents know I was sexually abused under their purview.

Bouts of depression came and lowered, but never left. I ultimately left skating in December 2005.

The first time I remember audibly screaming that I wanted to die was in 2006. I was done skating, I was trying to move on from the nightmare, however, the pain inside me only grew. Over my flip-phone I screamed to my mother, "I WANT TO DIE." I was in pain.

After graduating from Cornell University I moved to Harlem, NY. Countless mornings I wanted to jump in front of the oncoming Metro North Train. 10 years after the child sexual abuse ended, I actively wanted to end the pain.

After only a year of living in my Harlem apartment I had to move, because the huge window taunted me to jump. It wasn't the lure of jumping, but the knowledge of falling only 3 stories down to the sidewalk would not end my pain. I had to move.

In 2012 I reached bottom. My mum sat next to me as I just sobbed in pain. She begged me to tell her how she could help. I was in a chair, and she sat near my feet, her head on my knees. I finally asked for what I wanted, I asked my own mother to kill me.

Disclosure

In 2013, I returned to speed skating after a 7-year hiatus. I met Claire, a young fearless girl who is the reason I knew telling my story, telling the truth would be the right thing to do. I knew the insulting New York laws only opened me up to legal repercussions. I had been through so much pain, I was still decaying in pain—I decided I would sacrifice for Claire and all future Claire's. I went public as a survivor of child sexual abuse by known, respected, and honored Andy Gabel.



My depression reemerged with the most suffocating darkness in 2015. For my safety, all medicine and anything that could be used to overdose were confiscated from my possession. In September of 2016, again for my own safety, I was not per-

mitted to spend a night alone. Collectively, friends arranged who would spend the night at my apartment, ensuring I would wake in the morning. I was 34 years old.

And this January I shook in fear when a scheduled routine gynecological exam. January 2018 marks 20 years. It has been 20 years. I am still haunted by child sexual abuse.

I have grown to be a strong and brave woman, not because of the child sexual abuse that I endured, but despite the abuse.

Do you think I am brave?

Many praise my bravery—bravery in retelling my story, bravery in telling the truth.

Please take pause—what do you acknowledge as brave?

Standing up against the man who sexually abused me 20 years ago is brave. Then please, recognize the hypocrisy in expecting a child athlete to report sexual abuse while it is happening.

For many children it is impossible to disclose molestation or rape, because we did not and they do not have the vocabulary. I did not learn that being molested by a 33 year old man was a crime until I was at Cornell University; I was 27 years old.

Over 80 percent of child sexual abuse perpetrators know their victim, the child. On average survivors of child sexual abuse do not disclose until into his/her 40s. 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused by his 18th birthday. 1 in 4 girls are sexually abused by her 18th birthday. I have three sisters and two brothers. I am the statistic: I am the 1 in 4.



My story was told on February 28, 2013. Within days Andy Gabel releases the following statement¹:

MARCH 2, 2013, 9:52 AM

Three-time Olympic speedskater Andy Gabel apologized Friday for alleged sexual misconduct more than a decade ago with a 15-year-old female teammate when he was in his 30s.

"Almost two decades ago I displayed poor judgment in a brief, inappropriate relationship with a female teammate," Gabel told the Tribune. "It did not include sex, however I know what happened was wrong, and I make no excuses for my behavior. I apologize to her, and I am sorry for bringing negative attention to the sport that I love."

¹ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/sports/international/chi-olympian-apologizes-for-alleged-sexual-misconduct-20130301-story.html>

Scott Blackmun of the USOC made the following statements²:

"In sport, as in life, we have a duty to do everything we can to protect our children from abuse at the hands of adults," USOC chief executive Scott Blackmun said in a statement to the Tribune. "We are glad that Ms. Farrell chose to tell her story, because it will make others who have been abused aware that they are not alone and hopefully shine a light on the resources that are available to administrators, coaches, parents and athletes to help protect our young athletes."

However, when I met with Scott Blackmun, the then CEO of the USOC he specifically asked that I direct athletes to report to HIM and not to the media. He also made one other comment crystal clear—there was nothing he nor the USOC could do for me. The USOC would not look into taking away Andy Gabel's U.S. Speed Skating Membership nor Hall of Fame spot. The USOC would not look into preventing Andy Gabel from coach in other sports—not even within speed skating. Mr Blackmun made it clear by suggesting I return to my home state of NY and deal with the situation.

Mr Blackmun also told me that there was nothing the USOC could do—that the USOC did not have such jurisdiction over the NGBs. However, in the midst of the USA Gymnastic shake down the USOC acknowledge the NGB could be decertified and overtaken by the head organization. It certainly seems the USOC wants to pick and choose when to be involved, and it seems only when it favors the USOC.

I have spent a large part of the past three to four years working to reform the statute of limitations in NY for child sexual abuse in a bill we call the Child Victims Act. This time in the political arena has illustrated the need to hear not just both sides, but all sides. I've learned the value in having someone who has experience in the field. I have also learned the important issues are the ones discussed in hearings—again, I would like to thank you for sincerely pondering how best to make sports safer.

Again, the majority of my work is on the state level, I do have three concrete suggestions on how to improve the overall process within the USOC.

First, there really, really needs to be a higher percentage of athletes that are required to be on the National Governing Body Boards. In my opinion, closer to 50 percent of athletes voices ought to be heard. Much like I am here today based on my experiences of child sexual abuse, someone with actual speed skating experience should be at the table discussing how the organization moves forward.

Following suggestion one, the definition of an athlete ought to be expanded, in my opinion. Even with my competitive experience, I've aged out of being able to run for a position that must be held by an athlete. An older athlete doesn't forget too quickly the sacrifices of being an athlete! Also, an older individual will bring additional real world life experience to the position—a valuable attribute.

And finally, when there is any disclosure of sexual abuse, the police must be notified. How are we still living in an age of the Fox guarding the Hen house? Why.

In my opinion, I find it to be risky business for the United States Olympic Committee to dabble in adjudicating claims of sexual assault, sexual abuse, or rape. Rather than trying to protect the image of the organization or try to maintain sponsors, I believe the USOC should lobby for states to resurrect archaic statute of limitation laws on child sexual abuse from Alabama to Wisconsin from Oregon to New York.

IS THE USOC BETTER OFF NOW THAT SCOTT BLACKMUN STEPPED DOWN?

I would like to bring two criminal cases into this conversation. On 12/26/2017 Ryan P. Medina a former U.S. Postal worker was arrested in Colorado Springs, CO for having a sack letters that were not his. He was arrested on Federal charges, faces a \$250,000 fine and up to 5 years in prison.

On 1/15/2018 Tyshawn Gayle was arrested for allegedly answering ads on Craigslist and then stealing from the new roommates. He faces time. A total of 10 Craigslist victims have come forward and the arrest was able to be made by tips from the community.

Scott Blackmun knew that Dr Larry Nassar was a monster. Yet, Scott Blackmun still fed young girls in leotards through a door knowing full well there was a hungry

² <http://www.com/post/exclusive-audio-interview-speedskater-bridie-farrell-speaks-out-about-sexual-abuse-andy-gabel#stream/0>

lion on the other side. Over 250 women have come forward. People have died. Families have been torn apart. Lives have been largely ruined. Hundreds of women have PTSD, depression, anxiety, trust challenges, to name a few. The CEO that looks the other way or strategically wears earmuffs is just as much a kingpin in the game as the one committing the crime.

Institutions need to be held accountable. Survivors need to be acknowledged.

Without policy reform the unjust muzzle will remain bounded on children while safeguarding the pedophiles to roam free. So long as this abuse of power continues, the horror in gyms, dojos, fields, courts, pools, tracks, mountains, and ice rinks will not end.

Senator MORAN. Thank you.

Mr. Maurizi.

STATEMENT OF CRAIG MAURIZI, FIGURE SKATER

Mr. MAURIZI. Thank you for hearing me speak today.

One of the saddest things you'll hear in almost every case where a child was abused by an authority figure in Olympic sports is the number of years it took for any action to occur.

In my case, the abuse began nearly 40 years ago when I was 13. I reported it to my sports' governing body, the United States Figure Skating Association, nearly 20 years ago, and my abuser was suspended from coaching less than two months ago.

My story has a case history of the power of abusers and organizations to silence powerless child victims of sexual abuse in the relentless pursuit of money and medals.

Like many of these stories do, it began with a child chasing an Olympic dream. I was 13 years old and beginning to skate competitively in figure skating. I was thrilled to start working with Richard Callahan, who was the area's top coach and later became one of the most successful coaches of world and Olympic champions.

Richard took an immediate liking to me, spending hours in his office listening to me talk about my hopes, dreams, and challenges, and offering the advice of an older mentor. Years later, I realized this was part of a grooming process that resulted in sexual abuse that began when I was 15 and lasted into my early twenties.

During that time, we achieved considerable professional success. As a skater, I was a member of Team USA. Together, we coached some of the most prominent figures in our sport, including Gold Medalist Tara Lipinski.

Like many survivors of child sexual abuse, I had a deep personal connection and an undying loyalty to my abuser. It took years of soul searching and self-loathing, plus the support of my wife and family, before I fully recognized what he had done and mustered the courage to come forward and report it.

When I did, I was treated with the same disdain, disrespect, and disbelief by the U.S. Figure Skating Association as many of the Larry Nassar victims who tried to report him to USA Gymnastics or Michigan State University.

My character and motives were attacked on the pages of the *New York Times* by my abuser. Several other skaters came forward to publicly report allegations of sexual misconduct by Callahan.

The U.S. Figure Skating Association took no action against him, claiming that I had waited too long to report him. The rule at the time was I had a maximum of 60 days to report. They refused to even conduct an investigation and he was allowed to continue

coaching. I went on with my life and said nothing for 20 more years. In January of this year, something extraordinary happened. Hundreds of brave young women got up in public Michigan courtrooms and gave heart-wrenching testimony of the abuse they suffered at the hands of an Olympic team doctor. Olympic Medalists, including Jamie Dantzscher and Jordyn Wieber, revealed the pattern of disbelief and disrespect by their Olympic governing body, USA Gymnastics that was so similar to what I had experienced from U.S. Figure Skating that it made the hair on the back of my neck stand up.

These brave women gave me the courage to speak out again and I wanted to publicly thank them for it today.

I contacted U.S. Center for Safe Sport two months ago. They promptly opened an investigation and suspended Richard Callahan from coaching. It is my hope that he will be banned for life.

The U.S. Olympic Committee and its governing bodies are chartered by our Federal Government and this Committee has oversight authority. I respectfully ask you to find out why the USOC did nothing for decades while reports of child sexual abuse in many Olympic sports were ignored. Who is responsible for this tragedy and how will they be held accountable?

I love my sport and the Olympic movement. I still coach kids that have the Olympic dream, some of whom achieve it. Every child in every sport needs to know that the adults in charge have a duty to keep them safe. If they see or experience abuse, they must be assured that they will be believed and we will take action.

The Olympic Creed teaches us that the important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle.

No child should ever have to sacrifice his or her innocence as part of their struggle to represent our nation in the Olympics.

Thank you for your leadership and concern.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Maurizi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CRAIG MAURIZI, FIGURE SKATER

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No child should ever have to sacrifice his or her innocence as part of their struggle to represent our Nation in the Olympics.

Thank you for your leadership and concern.

Senator MORAN, Thank you, and thank all of our witnesses so much for your testimony.

First of all, let me respond by saying I indicated this with a few of the Olympians several weeks ago. I just don't understand. I don't know people who don't respond to the plea of a child for help. Whether you know that person or not, whether you have a responsibility, a legal or other responsibility, I don't know in my lifetime experiences how, when one hears the stories that you have told at ages in which we all have a responsibility to you, that there's not a response of help, a police report, a person of authority who responds to make sure that an individual is safe.

I don't know how we legislate that, but I want to certainly make the effort to make certain that no one's plea for help goes unanswered by the person that they make their point to, the person they make their case to, and so I want to explore what needs to happen going forward.

First, let me try to understand what the circumstances are. So we have three sports represented here, figure skating, speed skating, and gymnastics.

In light of the statements that you've made over time, I assume people will have contacted you, will have told you what they've ex-

perienced. So explain to the Subcommittee, if you can, how much broader this is. Let me ask the question in a less-biased way.

Do the problems that you describe extend beyond the sports that you participated in within amateur sports?

Ms. FARRELL. Sure. I can start by answering that. I wish the answer was no, but clearly it goes across all sports, summer, winter.

I was in Colorado Springs a few years ago just visiting a friend and I saw some athletes returning from a competition near—Taekwondo athletes. So they had their helmets and their guard on. So I knew who they were. Taekwondo is a sport that is played with horrific sexual abuse and I went up to these athletes and I said to them, hey, if you guys ever need anything, you need to talk to somebody outside of your sport, you can call me. My name's Bridie Farrell, and they all were just like, yes, we know who you are. OK. Right.

So like I've never met these people, I had no idea who they were, but in the sports where it's known about the problem and the people that have been identified and are repeatedly reported and nothing is done against them, I was able to reach out in that capacity and someone relayed it. So on a very tangible way, that's one example, I would say.

Senator MORAN. Are there no examples of where, when an athlete reported sexual misconduct, that the process, the system worked to protect that athlete? Those examples don't exist?

Ms. FARRELL. I've never heard of any.

Mr. MAURIZI. I can answer that, and I would have to say that in some instances, it has worked, in all fairness.

I met with two executives from U.S. Figure Skating at the Olympics in South Korea regarding my particular situation. I was informed for the first time since 1999 when I gave my first report, if you will, that as a result of my grievance, we called it, even though mine wasn't even heard, that things were put into place to begin the process of stopping this and as early as one year after I gave my testimony was denied, there was a first perpetrator that was caught and suspended from U.S. figure skating.

And so there has been steps, at least in my sport, taken to try to address this issue.

Senator MORAN. You in particular have utilized Safe Sport, and is it making the difference today that we would want to see?

Mr. MAURIZI. Yes and no. The reason I say that is, yes, in respect of the fact that my allegations were given credence and it was the first time in 20 years. I had just assumed that this is the way it was and I was just going to go on with my life. I had to make a choice because I still work in the business and so I was heartened by the seriousness that they took my allegation. They were very supportive and for that I'm grateful.

However, my fiancé asked a very important question of them while I was being interviewed and her question was, what happens after this situation ends? Let's say, you know, you find him guilty, does he go to jail? Does he serve any type of penalty beyond not being able to coach in a sport? And the answer was no, that, in fact, that's really about it, and then I made a point to the people there and other people who've asked the question.

My role right now is Director of Figure Skating in a rink in New Jersey. I'm in charge of hiring and firing coaches. If I wanted to today, I could hire this man to teach at my rink. Essentially, all that ban, at least in my sport, a ban from U.S. figure skating means is that Richard Callahan can't attend U.S. figure skating-sanctioned competitions, but what he does on a day-to-day basis that U.S. figure skating has no jurisdiction and so as shocking as that is, just because he's banned doesn't have enough teeth, in my opinion, and one of the reasons I'm here today is to put that forth to you and hopefully somebody can figure out a way how more teeth can be put into these situations and not allow him near children.

Ms. FARRELL. One aspect of the Safe Sport which I think is important to recognize is that Safe Sport is a byproduct of what the U.S. Olympic Committee wanted to happen. They're supposed to investigate and look into any sort of allegations that someone makes.

So, again, let's go back to Taekwondo where there are allegations against the Number 1 athlete and there is very, very concrete evidence. However, they have to be pretty sure that these things actually happened or else Safe Sport, USOC, is going to be sued for taking action against this athlete.

Well, the penalty would have been that he would not have been able to compete in the world championships, which would be a big bummer for him, right, like it's the biggest competition in the year, everybody wants to compete at world, but it's much bigger than that because how that athlete does at worlds can impact how many they're allowed to have, say, where they start in the World Cup next season or how many if it's a year before the Olympics, it might impact how many judo players are allowed to compete for Team USA, right.

So it's not just like it's a penalty against that one individual. It's a penalty against potentially much more in the sport and, quite honestly, in many sports, I would say the three at this table, happen more than every 4 years and so the funding is low and without earning medals, you don't get the funding that you need and if you only have one good athlete, you got to be really sure that this guy is wrong before you bench him and don't let him go to the world championships.

So having Safe Sport as your disciplinary board, although they say are separate, you have to realize the implications of taking action against one athlete, the trickle effect is much more, if that makes sense.

Senator MORAN. Yes, that does make sense. Thank you for answering my questions. I'll have more later, but let me now turn to the Ranking Member.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to yield to Senator Hassan, who has a scheduling issue and I'll go after.

Senator MORAN. Senator Hassan is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MAGGIE HASSAN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator HASSAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and for your courtesy, Ranking Member Blumenthal.

Thank all of you for being here. To all of the witnesses, I am so profoundly grateful for your leadership and your courage in revisiting some of the most painful moments of your life, all in order to help prevent others from enduring what you guys have endured. You are world-class athletes, you're heroes, and you're survivors, and your bravery here today to share your stories deserves our gratitude and respect to be sure but I just also want you to know what a change you are making for future generations of athletes as well as current athletes and what a great example, your standing up and speaking out is giving to so many other people who are going to also need to muster bravery and courage in their lives for one reason or the next.

I just thought maybe each of you could take a minute to address two questions I have, which will likely take the rest of the time I have for questions.

Given your experiences, I'd like to hear, if you can identify this, who you believe to be most responsible for allowing these abuses to continue and also what cultural factors in your training fostered an atmosphere in which these abuses could begin and continue for so long?

Maybe, Mr. Maurizi, I could start with you.

Mr. MAURIZI. Who would I hold accountable?

Senator HASSAN. Who do you think is the most accountable, I mean?

Mr. MAURIZI. Two answers come to my mind. First and foremost, when I decided to file a grievance, I hired an attorney to guide me through this. My attorney's first advice was to contact the local authorities and to report a crime.

The statute of limitations had run way past by the time I reported the crime. I was 36 years old. I believe at the time in Michigan where I was living, the statute was 26. I was also in New York and 26 was as old as I could be. I couldn't have fathomed have even dealing with that until much later, to be honest with you, so that was one thing.

Senator HASSAN. Yes.

Mr. MAURIZI. Second thing are the various rinks and figure skating clubs that I was a member of and participated in. My coach, I learned later, had to move from club to club to club because allegations surfaced about his treatment of his athletes.

Senator HASSAN. But none of them shared with other rinks?

Mr. MAURIZI. They did.

Senator HASSAN. Oh, they did?

Mr. MAURIZI. They did share with other rinks.

Senator HASSAN. OK.

Mr. MAURIZI. They shared rumors that they heard, but it is difficult to prosecute somebody on rumors, I guess. So everybody knew about it.

For example, when Richard moved to Detroit, the Detroit Skating Club, a former student of mine told me that she was told by the officials there that he wasn't allowed inside the men's locker room.

Senator HASSAN. OK.

Mr. MAURIZI. He was still hired.

Senator HASSAN. OK. I don't want to interrupt any of you, but we have limited time. So I'm just wondering, Ms. Farrell and Ms. Wieber, if you can take a stab each at this.

Ms. FARRELL. So in terms of who, I would say it really goes back to the men that are listed in the report that was given out. They knew about it. There was the same thing with the man that repeatedly molested me. He was known to be this person, and there was actually a report.

Senator HASSAN. OK.

Ms. FARRELL. It was swept under the rug and the culture that has to change, is the idea that we are so brave to be here it solidifies what the problem is. That is what shows how hard it is.

Senator HASSAN. Right.

Ms. FARRELL. And then you're expecting a kid to come forward and say things that they do not know the words that exist for, right?

Senator HASSAN. Yes.

Ms. FARRELL. So it's a culture, it's just a cultural issue, and it's the idea that people are finally speaking up, even look at *Time Magazine*. People are finally speaking up, honestly that's not true. We've been yelling and no one's been listening. So I would say the ears of all the adults out there.

Senator HASSAN. Thank you.

Ms. Wieber.

Ms. WIEBER. When I think about who's most accountable, obviously, as I said, USA Gymnastics, USOC, Michigan State, but if you look a little bit deeper than that, I think it all started when the Karolyis, who, you know, brought USA Gymnastics to where it is now, when they came over from Romania and they brought a lot of those training styles over, and a lot of the abusive training styles, and I think the USA Gymnastics started to see that it was winning medals and they were getting lots of money and then, as a result, I think that that training style kind of seeped into the personal coaches across the nation and now that's the normal way of coaching and you can ask any elite gymnast. They know exactly which coaches across the country are the most abusive, but people will still send their athletes there or their kids there because they know they want to be successful and that's their best chance of making the Olympic team.

So that's what they've made us believe, that that's the only way you're going to win medals and be successful is by having coaches that will beat you to the ground like that. So I think the cultural issues start with the Karolyis and then that training style.

Senator HASSAN. Thank you.

And with the Chair's indulgence, could we hear briefly hear from Ms. Dantzsch, too? Thank you.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. As far as the most accountable, I would obviously agree with Jordan. It's very similar to my experience.

And with regard to how people say this, that I'm so brave and I appreciate what you say because I've never felt brave. I felt like I was doing the right thing and so hearing Mr. Maurizi's testimony made me cry because that's one of the reasons why I came forward was to tell people it's OK to speak up.

Senator HASSAN. Yes.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. And the other thing is I guess the cultural problems in gymnastics are there are so many—as you said, Larry Nassar saw the coaches’ abuse almost on a daily basis, and he didn’t report their abuse and vice versa. So they protected each other.

I obviously want to come forward because I was sexually abused and so I wanted to do the right thing and I wanted to protect others and it shouldn’t take having to have the experience to do the right thing because I wonder if this would have happened to anyone that was running USAG, any one of their daughters or their sons or any of their kids, you know, would they have reacted differently, you know?

Senator HASSAN. Look. Thank you all very, very much, and I look forward to reading and hearing some more of your testimony.

Thank you again to the Chair and Ranking Member for your courtesy.

Senator MORAN. Senator Blumenthal.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you. Thank you again.

Let me ask you. Do you think this kind of abuse is still going on in gymnastics or skating?

Ms. DANTZSCHER. Yes, I know for sure it’s still going on. When you have USA Gymnastics, the organizing governing body, that’s the leadership and that’s how they decide to lead, that’s going to trickle down and be a failed system completely.

A lot of people will say, the abuser, oh, not Larry, he’s so nice, and everyone liked him and trusted him, and it doesn’t matter how nice they are. In fact, it’s usually the nicest ones. That’s how they groom. That’s how they manipulate everybody. That’s what they live for and that doesn’t mean that it should be OK for him to be in a room alone with children. It shouldn’t matter how nice they are.

Gymnastics also is a very hands-on sport. So we actually do need, you know, males and females that know how to spot and help us learn skills when we’re younger, but I definitely think there needs to be policies that change how they put their hands on us and when there’s something called “body shaping” that’s just so normal.

There was times Larry was touching me over my leotard and in the middle of the gym in Texas at the training center and everybody was there and no one thought anything of it because it seemed normal in gymnastics and things like that need to be changed.

Ms. WIEBER. I think the interesting thing, as well, is with USA Gymnastics, obviously the Board of Directors all resigned, but the people who are on the National Team staff or in charge of the training camps every month, the ones who have the most interaction with the athletes are still there. It’s the same people in charge and I don’t think that they’re innocent at all. I think that they’ve seen things and haven’t said anything or they knew things at one point and didn’t do the right thing and I feel like there needs to be an entirely new staff in order for this to stop.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Ms. Bridie Farrell, how about speed skating?

Ms. FARRELL. To be honest, I think speed skating is pretty good on the whole in this. I mean, I came forward and women came forward after me, but all for the same person.

I know of one person who is coaching and was accused of something. So USA Speed Skating quickly took him out of a coaching position and gave him a position as being an athlete, doesn't really solve the problem, right.

So I would say within speed skating, it's a very, very small sport, small community, and most of what I see that it is OK.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And how about in figure skating?

Mr. MAURIZI. I'm sure that it's—rampant may be a bit strong, but I'd say it's very prevalent in the sport.

Coaches at the grassroots level, in the trenches, if you will, operate almost in complete autonomy. There are no mechanisms in place, with the exception of if you go on a website and you read the things not to do. There's no enforcement. I think that without any enforcement, people are able to do as they please.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. What is shocking to me is not only that this kind of predatory abuse happened, but that it is ongoing. It's continuing, even after all of the shocking revelations, even after Larry Nassar has been sentenced to 175 years, even after some of the marginal changes that have been made in the sport, it continues, according to your testimony.

If you were advising parents as to how to avoid this scourge, this continuing scourge for their children, what would you say to them?

Ms. DANTZSCHER. I think one of the things I really want to do is go to different gyms around the country and talk to gym owners, parents, and the children and bring more education and awareness about the subject, Number 1.

I think in gymnastics the parents are often encouraged not even to watch practice. They don't want them to be too involved, not to ask too many questions, and when I was coaching, I always—that's their child. They're allowed to ask whatever question they want. So I think just looking for those red flags. If they tell you not to watch your kid train or you're not allowed to ask questions, I don't think that's a good sign right there, but I would definitely tell them, you know, to look for those things, and even if you trust this coach and he's the nicest person in the world, don't trust them too much, don't let them ever be alone with them.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Especially if they're offering favors or food or visits to their rooms. You've described, all of you have described, I think, a grooming process, correct?

Ms. WIEBER. I think my mom experienced some of the same things. Even though I was the one abused, she was just as manipulated by somebody like Larry, and I think aside from Larry, there's so much intimidation that goes on between parents and coaches and parents and USA Gymnastics.

Our parents were allowed to travel to our meets but we weren't allowed to see them ever and they're just basically told not to ask any questions, not to argue because obviously they want the best for their children. They want us to be successful and they feel like they should be able to trust these organizations but clearly they couldn't.

I think there are just so many different levels of intimidation going on. I don't feel confident that our parents should be able to trust the governing bodies.

Ms. FARRELL. For me, this is a really tricky question because I still love speed skating and sports and everything. I put my kids in speed skating. I still think it's great. I think that the majority of athletes and coaches are wonderful people and are not child molesters, but every child molester would love to be a coach, right. So that's a really, really disturbing sentence.

But I think it's also important to recognize that the majority of child sexual abuse is from people within the home and people we know. It's more within families and coming from the sports community so I think that it's really important to not bounce too far and for kids that are being sexually abused at home, that 30 minutes they have with that coach might be the only 30 minutes they can pretend that they actually have a dad, right. So there are two sides to it.

In speed skating, it's a very technical sport. So you have blades that are bent and only go left. They're offset on your foot and they're rocked. They're not actually flat, depending on the ice surface and the humidity in the rink. All these things will change and so you'll change your skates, your blades, and you'll go to your coach's room to do this and there was never an issue with him. I can list out thousands of people that were so helpful to my speed skating career and then I can list out a few that were very, very problematic.

So I think that the idea of kids being able to tell their parents is one thing for sure. I've told my parents many times and I'm not sure it's set in yet. So I think kids really need to somehow develop a relationship externally where they're like an aunt or an uncle that they can tell these things to because parents don't want to hear it as much as the governing bodies don't want to hear it as much as no one wants to hear it, right.

What I went through was really, really awful, but the competing and the camaraderie and all of that was also quite amazing and so I think it's important just to keep that in mind, as well.

Mr. MAURIZI. I've been coaching now for almost 30 years and I can tell you many war stories the coaches talk about amongst each other about the horrible parents that we've had to deal with, that they, you know, infiltrate this, they talk about that, they talk in the lobby. We call it lobby talk where it influences their ability to make money because maybe they want to switch coaches or something like this.

And so a lot of coaches don't like the parents to be in the rink to watch. They even have talks with them about not being in the rink and so they can do their work not overanalyze.

I was one of those people for a long, long time because I was, you know, young and I thought I was going to change the world but I made a big about face, if you will, and I find it very easy to be able to treat an athlete the correct way, even if the parents are watching. I feel it's not difficult to allow the parents into the room if you're going to change the blade or you do it in a public place.

I remember talking to somebody about how things are done in figure skating and his jaw dropped. He says you do what, you do

what? If you take one step back and you apply common sense to interpersonal relationships, it's really not that difficult to do things the right way.

We have some cultures inside of our own sports of ways that we've done things for years and years and years that for us is completely normal but if I told you about them, you'd be shocked, one of them being the going into the hotel room. For us, this is normal. It's no big deal, but I'm sure there has got to be a couple people in this room that say what, a young teenage girl walks into the adult male's hotel room and it's fine? That for me is something to think about.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Let me thank you all. I've gone way over my time and I apologize to the Chairman, but, you know, we can't eradicate all the evils in the world and a lot of people come to us and say, well, we made a mistake, we need to do better, but there are clearly systematic failings here in the United States Olympic Committee that need to be addressed, not just with kind of admonitions but making structural reforms, and you said, I think it was Ms. Bridie Farrell, one of you, that we have responsibility because it's on us, the U.S. Congress, which has oversight authority over the United States Olympic Committee, and so your stories and your admonitions and your testimony that this scourge is continuing are a mandate to us that we need to take steps to crack down.

Thank you.

Ms. FARRELL. Can I mention one more thing?

Senator MORAN. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. FARRELL. I think something else to consider when looking at so many different sports is that, for example, speed skating is sort of different in that men and women train together and you can be good when you're young and good when you're old. So I was good when I was 15 and then I took 7 years off and I was good when I was 22 and men and women train on the same sheet of ice.

I mean, you're not going to see that at different levels or that kind of thing. So then you're going to have men and women sharing locker rooms and the things that we would do and change, everyone would be like that's just weird, but it has always been that way.

So I think when you guys go back and are thinking about it, there are just so many different dynamics. If you just think locker rooms, you just think men in the locker room, there's just so much more to the reach of the different sports.

Senator MORAN. Ms. Cortez Masto.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEVADA**

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

First of all, let me just say thank you to the Chairman for holding this hearing today. I know Senator Lee and I and a number of committee members have requested this, so appreciate the conversation today, and then like my colleagues, I want to echo thank you all for being here. Your voices will make that change, will make a difference and help others and that's one of the things I want to talk about.

You know, I spent prior to coming to the Senate, gosh, 10 years as a prosecutor working to protect children from sexual predators. What I have seen and heard here today unfortunately is a system failure that has allowed these predators to thrive and you've talked about it.

The grooming that occurs, the keeping the parents out, and one issue that I want to talk specifically about, because I only have about 5 minutes, is this notion that of children, sometimes there's this thought they should be asking for help, but when you're a child and you don't know any different, this becomes your norm. So you don't know that you need to ask for help and when you do figure that out, is there somebody that you can reach out to for help? That's what I see happening here and so what I would love from the four of you your thoughts.

What I have found is sometimes it helps to have an advocate, somebody who is there with the athletes, somebody that particularly our child athletes become familiar with, knowing that it's somebody that is going to advocate on their behalf for everything that you've just talked about.

Do you think if we were looking at implementing and working with the USOC, that we looked at having child advocates amongst the system, that that would be helpful and that would have helped you and/or will help other children that are coming through the amateur sports to help them address their needs? Let me just open it to all of you.

Ms. WIEBER. I absolutely think that's necessary. With USA Gymnastics, we had an athlete representative who was also on the Selection Committee. So she was supposed to be our advocate, but she was also the one deciding whether we made the team, whether we would go compete for Team USA.

So even if she would be there to advocate for us, we didn't want to tell her anything because we were scared it would ruin our chances, which we know it probably would have. So I feel very strongly that that has to be somebody who is not on the Selection Committee, who is totally on the athletes' side and that's their main role, is making sure that we can trust them and they'll stand up for us.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. Maybe even, because I had a similar experience with my athlete rep, I don't think she was on the Selection Committee at the time, but we definitely couldn't trust her. Everything we told her, she'd just run back and tell them and we would just get in more trouble.

So maybe an athlete rep could be someone from a different sport because I think it is a good idea that it's somebody who's not so close because it seems, if they're working for them, they're working with them.

But I did want to mention, this might be a little off your question, but really quickly, one of the other issues I found, so as I was working with another coach I was coaching with him, and I started seeing things that I wanted to be in denial about and I saw that he was touching the kids inappropriately when he was spotting, and I didn't know what to do and when I finally decided to report it to the police, I wanted to be anonymous and they wouldn't allow me to be anonymous and they wanted to interview the children and

I was like that's not going to work. Some of these kids are five and it's like five to 16 years old and they don't even know. They're not even aware that they're being abused right now.

And so I wanted to bring that up because I think that's another avenue to look into, is how, when it is reported, how does the investigation go down, because, you know, these are highly skilled manipulators and, you know, this one particular one had a family and it's like it's his word against theirs and if you can't prove it, you know, it destroys a lot of lives and that's just something I wanted to point out because I couldn't go through with the full report because of that.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. I agree, and I think and just from my experience, I know many law enforcement agencies have specific units that just focus on child sexual abuse. So that the investigators and the prosecutors know how to talk and relate and do that type of investigation but not all have the resources to do so.

But I agree that is part of the issue here that I have seen, is this willingness to come forward but at the same time law enforcement needs enough information so that they can take action because once you go to law enforcement, it's a criminal action. So they have to be able to investigate it from a criminal perspective and that means going through all of those hoops. So there is a disconnect and we've got to figure out how we connect that. You're absolutely right.

Let me ask you this, another question very quickly because I'm actually out of time. I just realized that. So I have other questions to follow up on, but I will submit those for the record.

But let me just say this. Thank you again. I look forward to the opportunity to work with you. I am committed to making change however we can, systemic change, and I am looking forward to the USOC coming here along with the National Governing Bodies, and folks from Michigan. They should be at the table here and they should be answering our questions.

So thank you again for being here.

Senator MORAN. Senator Klobuchar.

**STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA**

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all of you.

I think I've seen you, Ms. Wieber, before and have worked through the Judiciary Committee and was a sponsor of the bill with Senators Feinstein and Grassley and we introduced to prevent these types of tragedies from occurring in the future.

I'm also the Co-Chair of the Olympic Caucus and want our Olympics to be a wonderful place to be for girls and young people. A little side note. We're proud of the Women's Hockey Team and Minnesotans' role in that, but your story makes it all not something to be proud of and we want that to change and so if you didn't come forward, I don't think we would be where we are and I want to thank all of you for your courage in coming forward.

OK. So, Ms. Farrell, in your testimony, you emphasized that reporting these crimes to local law enforcement must be a routine

step. Oftentimes what we see in these is there's no encouragement to go to local law enforcement. I'm a former prosecutor, like Senator Cortez Masto, and I know how important that is if you're going to make this work.

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act spans mandatory recording requirements to include adults affiliated with USA Gymnastics or similar organizations.

Ms. Farrell, how can we ensure recording requirements are well understood and universally practiced, so people know what they're supposed to do?

Ms. FARRELL. I think that after the wake of USA Gymnastics, that people across the country are wondering what to do and what to do with our kids in sports and everything like that. So I think it's a beautiful time to work on this legislation and then have a PSA and let people know that we've gone to our authorities in years past and it never went to the police, but, say, let people know that this is what should be expected as well as there should be some sort of repercussion if that doesn't happen.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. That's part of why the crimes went unreported for so long.

Ms. FARRELL. Right. And they just wanted to take out the statute of limitation clock, then they're off the hook, but, I mean, how do you make people actually do that? I think you have to change the incentives structure and as long as the insurance companies are paid this amount for sex abuse and they know that statute of limitations is this long and people don't report, then they hedge those bets, but as soon as you can change the incentive, which it seems in this country is the only way is with the dollar, right?

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mm-hmm.

Ms. FARRELL. So I think until there is something that's going to force these governing bodies to change their behavior, I don't know how else to get them to change.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Does anyone else want to talk about why it's difficult for people or was difficult for them to come forward and this went on so long because of that, besides the not telling you you should go to law enforcement? Ms. Wieber?

Ms. WIEBER. Yes. I've already mentioned some things about this, but I think with gymnastics there's this culture of silence and we are afraid that if we speak out it's going to ruin our chances of reaching our goal.

I mean, the window of opportunity for a gymnast is so small with just the nature of our sport and our age and everything, but also I think it starts when we're—I mean, I started gymnastics at four years old and by the time I was seven, if I was late to practice, I had to climb the rope. There's a rope that goes from the floor to the ceiling. So right from the beginning, this culture of fear is instilled if you don't do something, there's always a punishment. Even when we were injured, we were scared to tell our coaches. I was terrified if my ankle started hurting to tell my coach because I knew he would be mad at me and then I had to go see the doctor.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. It's part of the whole culture, right?

Ms. WIEBER. It really is, yes.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. And then one of the ideas of the Olympic Committee's going to work to give athletes more representation in governance decisions and that they have a seat at the table.

Maybe does anyone have recommendations on ways to enhance the role of athletes within the U.S. Olympic Committee and National Governing Bodies of Sports? Anyone? Ms. Farrell? Mr. Maurizi?

Mr. MAURIZI. How to do it? I mean, certainly the number of representatives should be vastly increased. I've always said at least in the figure skating world that the officials stay in the nicest hotels, they get the best accommodations, they have the most comfortable life, whereas the athletes stay in rooms with two or four people because they're considered down the food chain, but, in reality, the officials never would have been there if the athletes weren't participating.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Exactly.

Mr. MAURIZI. I think that that mentality, I mean, is stupid. I have always thought that. I never understood why athletes were put down the food chain, and I think that they for sure should be the leaders of the organization.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. So having more on these Governing Bodies and the U.S. Olympic Committee would help?

Mr. MAURIZI. It is a place to start for sure.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. I would think that would lead to changes even outside of the reporting of sexual assault.

Go ahead, Ms. Farrell.

Ms. FARRELL. I think it was across all Olympic sports, we have two athlete reps per sport and over the years, they changed. They had to be male and female, et cetera, but so after I was abused, Andy Gabel's best friend was the athlete rep. So I wasn't going to tell her. Once he stopped skating, everyone was like then, well, why didn't you come forward? Well, he was the President of U.S. Speed Skating, right, so, and he came up to me like a month after it stopped and he came up to me in the stands and he's like have you told anyone?

So he knew right after it stopped, it was wrong. Two years later, we're in England at the World Championships, at a banquet, and he corners me and he's like have you told this person, have you told this person? So it doesn't stop, you know, and then I went up to—he was the President of U.S. Speed Skating and I was typically known as maybe one of the louder feistier ones on the team and so people asked me to go to President Andy and report on somebody else.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Right.

Ms. FARRELL. I said this is what's going on with this trainer. He was employed by the USOC, and he's like so what's the big deal and looks at me with that smirk of like and, I mean, I was standing high and he was low and he just looked me up and down, was like, and so it's like when that becomes the leadership, that's the problem, and it trickling down from there is not going to change it.

So having more athletes involved is going to be a very, very—
Senator KLOBUCHAR. Exactly.

Ms. FARRELL.—big idea. So expanding the definition of an athlete, right, so, I mean, I would love to be involved, but I've long since timed out of being able to be involved.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. OK. I don't think you would have smirked at anyone.

All right. Thank you all, really appreciate your leadership and courage.

Senator MORAN. Senator, thank you very much.

Now Senator Capito.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WEST VIRGINIA**

Senator CAPITO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the hearing and thank all of you. Your stories are very compelling. They're very impactful, I believe, and will be, have been already, and will continue to be, and so I thank you for that.

I have a couple sort of questions of during the time. I know as athletes, you all have psychological trainers, people that come in because a lot of sports is not just your bodies. A lot of it's your mind at the same time. So I would imagine you had access to psychologists during the time. Is that part of your training? No? No. That surprises me. Yes?

Ms. FARRELL. If we wanted. When we lived at the Olympic Training Center, if you wanted to, you could. It wasn't necessarily a very cool thing to do but I went and did it.

Ms. WIEBER. I mean, we would have to find our own. It wasn't a part of, you know, the National Team or USA Gymnastics.

Senator CAPITO. Right.

Mr. MAURIZI. I actually worked with one for a little bit at a time, but the thinking at the time when I was a skater was that the sports psychologists had as much the propensity of messing you up mentally was much higher than helping you and so you only used one if you were already a mess.

Senator CAPITO. Well, in thinking of ways to, you know, improve the system since you have access to that type of professionalism, you would think that part of the protocol of, you know, why isn't she performing very well this morning or, you know, is there something else going on, you would think that that would be part of the protocol, and I hope that it will become moving forward that you equip the psychologists with that kind of—yes, did you want to say something?

Ms. DANTZSCHER. Yes, so I did work with a psychologist that they provided and I just didn't really click with her and I didn't really trust her.

Senator CAPITO. It is very personal.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. And find out later she was actually one of the people advocating for Larry Nassar when I first came forward. So, again, somebody that has made a lot of money from our sport, who still makes a lot of money from our sport, and I know of other instances where she worked with athletes and groups of athletes at gyms and, you know, compromised their confidentiality by telling their coaches everything and then the gymnasts once again get in trouble.

So, again, when it seems like everyone who works, you know, for them are with them in my mind.

Senator CAPITO. Right. It becomes part of the system is what you're saying.

I want to change topics.

Ms. FARRELL. Can I ask one question on that?

Senator CAPITO. Yes, certainly.

Ms. FARRELL. I think what you're—you're making a really good point in that psychology is a huge aspect of sports, but you said why isn't she performing well today? Well, these two have Olympic medals, right? So they performed pretty freaking well.

However, imagine if they weren't concerned about being molested or raped how well they would have performed. I'm not saying like you specifically but like so that whole extra level of thinking about, yes, USA Gymnastics is a really good sport, we don't really need to worry about that, when it's actually like USA Gymnastics should be killing it everywhere because these girls shouldn't have to be worried about that. I went to sports psychologists and all sorts of shrinks for years and never told anyone.

Senator CAPITO. Right. I know, and I'm thinking maybe this is an avenue to improve the situation.

Ms. FARRELL. One hundred percent.

Senator CAPITO. Yes. Drugs. I'm wondering, you know, there's a lot of pain with injury and every sport has this and we have heard numerous testimony through all of our committees that a lot of opioid addiction occurs after a sports injury and has occurred after sports injuries.

I think at least one of the young ladies that was involved in the case against Larry Nassar did say that she had been drugged or had taken drugs. I'm interested if that was occurring at the same time or if it was occurring and then the question becomes what kind of oversight over a physician does anybody have over what kind of drugs were being dispensed and at what kind of frequency? So we'll just go down the—yes? Anybody? Yes.

Ms. WIEBER. Well, their medical records, they don't have any medical records, whether they're destroyed or they just didn't take any.

Senator CAPITO. That's convenient.

Ms. WIEBER. So looking back, we don't know. I don't even know what medications they were giving me. Obviously Larry Nassar was the one administering them. There is no record of it. It's really hard to tell.

Senator CAPITO. As everything becomes more and more public, I think this is something that is probably going to be more pervasive than what we really know at this point.

Ms. FARRELL. In speed skating, we would have to—the trainer told us that when he goes back, he would empty out the drug tackle box and it was like he'd dispensed this, this, and this, and then they'd say what athlete that went to.

Senator CAPITO. You would think that's what happens in a hospital or a doctor's office or something like that.

Ms. FARRELL. Again picking a sport that they're doing so well to let it slip by, you know.

Senator CAPITO. Last question is—well, first of all, on the social media bullying, this is a real problem for me as now the new grandmother of four girls, but, anyway, just young people in general. I think it's a real problem and you mentioned it in your testimony how when you came forward, you experienced social bullying.

So I'm very interested in that, but I'm going to jump to this other question because you all participate in international sports.

Is this a problem internationally in every other country? I'm sure you talk to your fellow athletes as you're traveling around, especially since this has become public. Have you heard or talked with anybody in other countries where this is an issue and do they have a better protocol for handling these kinds of things? So I'll start with you.

Mr. MAURIZI. The truth is I'm not aware of how other people in other countries handle it to any large degree. I know that different cultures have different ways of thinking about these types of situations and in some countries, I'm sorry to say, but the culture is that this is almost normal, that it's what guys do.

Senator CAPITO. The athletes are sort of throw-aways.

Mr. MAURIZI. The athletes are throw-aways, yes.

Senator CAPITO. Yes?

Ms. FARRELL. There is a really terrible, terrible situation that recently fell out in USA Speed Skating Canada. So, it does happen in skating around the world.

Ms. WIEBER. I don't know of any specifically. If I had to guess, I would say probably, yes, considering the nature of our sport.

Senator CAPITO. Right.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. I would agree with Jordyn. I don't have any direct examples of it.

Senator CAPITO. Right. Thank you. Thank you all very much.

Senator MORAN. Thank you, Senator Capito.

We've been joined by the Chairman of the Full Commerce Committee, Senator Thune, and I'd recognize him now.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN THUNE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and both you and Senator Blumenthal, for holding the hearing and for your continued work to protect American athletes, and I join the Senator from West Virginia in having raised two daughters who are competitive athletes and now in the grandkids' season of life. It is something that really weighs heavily, particularly when you hear the experiences that many of you have had and so we are very grateful for your courage to speak out as a result of that.

There is one monster who's behind bars and National Governing Bodies that have new mandatory reporting requirements. So you're making a difference. Thank you for doing it.

The USOC has a new and unambiguous duty, I should say, now, too, to promote a safe environment in sports and a duly authorized U.S. Center for Safe Sport is armed with new tools and access to Federal funds to ensure it will operate as an independent and effective backstop, again a great tribute to the work that you all have done.

It has been a sad chapter for Olympic athletes, but our recently enacted legislation does send a message to adults in positions of authority that nothing you ever do in athletics is as important as how you respond when an abused child asks for help. So these and other reforms are only happening because brave athletes stood up and called out that wrong-doing to stop abuse.

While I wish it were under different circumstances, I have had the pleasure of meeting with Ms. Wieber and Ms. Dantzscher earlier this year. I have not had that opportunity to meet with Ms. Farrell or Mr. Maurizi, but I want to welcome you both here, as well, today.

This question if for our gymnasts, Ms. Dantzscher and Ms. Wieber, when we met previously, we discussed the role of the USOC in overseeing both the NGBs and athlete safety in general.

As the Committee looked deeper into these issues, I was disturbed to learn that in legal proceedings involving another National Governing Body, the USA Taekwondo, the USOC took the position that the Committee did not have a responsibility to protect athletes because, and I quote, "The USOC does not have athletes and that the Team USA is just," and I quote again, "branding terminology."

Because of statements like these, I worked with my colleagues here on the Committee to amend the Ted Stevens Act to make it unambiguous, that a central purpose of the USOC is to promote a safe environment in sports that is free from abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, of any amateur athlete.

So the question I have is with this clarification, do you believe that the USOC's responsibility to protect athletes is now clear? I will direct that to Ms. Dantzscher and Ms. Wieber.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. I think it's clear that they need to be responsible for that and that they need to have a thorough investigation of the USOC, as well, and I think when I hear statements like that, it doesn't really surprise me because that was our experience with the USA Gymnastics and if USA Gymnastics is supposed to answer to the USOC and that's the reaction, then obviously the problem gets worse and worse.

Ms. WIEBER. I would agree with Jamie and also after many people came forward and said that Larry Nassar had abused them, I didn't get a phone call from anybody at USOC asking anything until after I gave a victim impact statement in January. About a month and a half later, I got a call from Scott Blackmun.

So, it's like this feeling, if you're not a currently-competing athlete, you're not very relevant. They don't really care anymore, whereas if it was somebody who's still currently competing for USA Gymnastics and the USOC, they're going to care and they're going to make sure they listen to her and sit down with her and ask her because I know I don't think that they have asked any of us to sit down and listen to our stories like you guys are.

Senator THUNE. Well, I just hope the intention of the work that this Committee is doing is to make it unambiguous and clear, that it is part of the USOC's responsibility, and that protecting athletes is a priority, not only a priority that they need to be paying attention to, but that everybody that is associated with the movement,

that they make it clear that that it's part of the culture that they need to create there.

So we want to send that message clearly. I hope that some of the steps that we've been taking are helping to do that, but obviously we have a lot of work to do and a lot of harm has been done in the past and it's hard to undo that, but we want to make sure that the future rules are clear and everybody knows what their responsibilities are.

So thank you again for being here and thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding the hearing.

Senator MORAN. Thank you, Chairman Thune.
Senator Peters.

**STATEMENT OF HON. GARY PETERS,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MICHIGAN**

Senator PETERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the four of you for offering just an incredibly powerful, compelling testimony that I think everyone should hear.

Mr. Chairman, Chairman Thune, and Chairman Moran, thank you for calling this hearing.

I'm not a Member of this Subcommittee, but this is definitely something that is hitting the people of the state of Michigan, which I'm blessed to represent here in the Senate, quite hard from the monstrous actions of Larry Nassar, which are absolutely horrifying, and the more facts that come out, the more stories that come out, the more horrifying it is, and so it's important that we address this so it never happens again, and I can speak as a Michigan State alum, this has hit Michigan State alumni particularly hard.

I hear it in Michigan every day as I travel around the country. Alumni come up to me and they wonder like how could this happen, you know, how could this happen at our university, and then the next question or the next statement they will make is that we have to do everything possible to make sure this never happens again, not just to Michigan State University but at other places across the country, as well.

But then the second right after that is that they also say, and I want to be sure you know that they all say, we have to make sure that the university stands behind the victims, that the university has an obligation to be there for you, to be there to also assist in the healing process which will likely take a long time, and we want to make sure that we have your back, as well, here in the United States Senate.

So the first question I have for Ms. Wieber is, what is your assessment of how Michigan State University has handled this situation?

Ms. WIEBER. I think they have handled it very poorly, honestly. It's all over the media. There has been so many instances where survivors will go to the board meetings and try to encourage them to listen and they've just been turned away and not listened to and denied and offered settlements and just ridiculous things like that.

I think they're still refusing to admit what the problem really is and that they're accountable for it and I feel like that's what's missing is they're not accountable. They don't really think that they were responsible for Larry Nassar doing what he did, but in

the end, even when we were in London at the Olympics, he was employed by Michigan State University even as the Olympic doctor.

Senator PETERS. There's a new interim President at Michigan State University now. How would you assess his handling of the situation?

Ms. WIEBER. I would say he's almost trying to fight the survivors versus working with us. I think that that would be my assessment.

Senator PETERS. Has he reached out to you in any way?

Ms. WIEBER. No.

Senator PETERS. Do you know if he has reached out to other victims in a meaningful way?

Ms. WIEBER. I don't know.

Senator PETERS. Ms. Dantzsch, you've also mentioned Michigan State University. Do you have an assessment of how you believe that they've handled the situation?

Ms. DANTZSCHER. I'd have to agree with Jordyn and that's pretty much it. I mean either, you know, when they had reports and complaints and allegations of Larry Nassar and they never told USAG and vice versa and, you know, I think hundreds of victims were molested even after complaints were made, so.

Senator PETERS. Ms. Wieber, we're going to have or at least we've requested—Mr. Chairman, you've requested Michigan State University, I believe, to appear.

Senator MORAN. I'll try to make that clear. We have set a date, May 22, for an additional hearing. My intention is to have Michigan State, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and USAG invited. They have not yet been invited. They've only been notified of the date, sort of a save-the-date request.

Senator PETERS. Very good. Well, I appreciate that, appreciate reaching out, and it's going to be important to have all of them here obviously because we have to make sure that it doesn't happen again, and I think I'm certainly going to take to heart the incredible testimony that I received from all four of you.

But I guess I'm curious when they are before us, and I intend to be back when they're here before us in this subcommittee, what question would you like to have them answer, if you had one question, and whoever would like to start, but I would like to hear from all four of you as you're thinking about that.

Mr. MAURIZI. When I think back to my particular situation, there's just no way that dozens, if not hundreds, of people in and around the ice rinks didn't know what was going on. I look back on it. It was obvious. I mean 5-hour meetings in the office with, you know, a 15-year-old boy. That's ridiculous.

My question would be how do you live with yourself? How are you able to be so weak within yourself to not be able to stand up simply because somebody's going to look at you wrong, somebody's going to not maybe like you as much? How are you able to sleep at night? That'd be my question.

Senator PETERS. Thank you. If anyone else would like to, you don't have to, but anyone else?

Ms. WIEBER. I think my question would be why still is reputation of the university and money more important than the lives of hun-

dreds of girls and women who are abused under their responsibility?

Senator PETERS. Thank you.

Ms. FARRELL. I think you should take our names out and take our pictures out and put their kids in and see if it makes a difference, and the idea that they are worried about people looking at them poorly by speaking up and doing the wrong thing, maybe a few individuals at the time, well, let them know that there are thousands of people looking at them like they should be for missing the opportunity.

I mean, my incident, as well, started at Northern Michigan University and the police knew and it should have never happened. The police knew and it should have never happened. Like there's just no other explanation.

Senator PETERS. Thank you. Thank you very much, appreciate your testimony.

Senator MORAN. Senator Peters, thank you very much for joining us, I appreciate it. Senator Peters is a member of the Full Commerce Committee but not a Member of this Subcommittee, and we appreciate your interest in this topic and particularly as it relates to Michigan and Michigan State.

We have just a few minutes before vote's going to be called.

I do have questions and Senator Blumenthal, I teased him a bit a moment ago because every time he tells me that he knows he has gone beyond his time, he keeps talking. So I assume he feels comfortable knowing that he has already had his second round of questions. So I'm going to keep talking.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And I'm going to remain silent.

Senator MORAN. Let me ask this question. There's an image, at least in my world of how I view U.S. Olympics athletes, and we put you on a pedestal, those who are aspiring to be U.S. Olympic winners, those who have that success.

I think we have a culture in this country in which we admire young men and women who pursue success, who pursue excellence in sports.

I also have an image of the U.S. Olympic Committee as a place in which that process by which that aspiration is pursued occurs and had the sense before these stories developed that they, too, would put the Olympians, the athletes, on a pedestal, as well.

What has been described to me in conversations, as well as your testimony today, is something significantly different than that, unless you tell me that I've misunderstood, and the financial burdens that come from being an athlete pursuing Olympic gold is significant and tremendous.

You've all talked about grooming. I assume that's related to the aspiration to be an Olympian, to be an Olympic gold winner, but it also could be part of the financial aspect. You are successful financially when you have success athletically is the way it seems to me and so I'm interested for a couple of reasons about the finances, but for me to understand that, maybe if just one of you would describe to me what your life is like as you pursue that dream of being an Olympic gold winner and what that means in a sense of who you rely on, who your family is.

We've talked about how Dr. Nassar is a person who you went to because he was kinder and more accommodating to the concerns you had and groomed you to end up in a particular circumstance, but tell me about the nature of being an Olympic athlete that lends itself particularly because of finances to the way that you behave and the way that that allows other people to treat you. Does that question make sense? OK.

I don't know who would be best to do this. Ms. Wieber?

Ms. WIEBER. I think I understood what your question was. So for gymnastics specifically, once you make the U.S. National Team, only then you get training expenses funded. So it's a stipend every month of \$800.

Senator MORAN. So in your case, from age what to what you and your family were paying for your efforts?

Ms. WIEBER. Right. So I started at age four and I made the National Team at age 11, which is a little bit early, earlier than most girls, but only then you get your training expenses covered, which is, well, you get a stipend every month, which may or may not cover all of your expenses, which is medical bills, tuition, gas driving to and from practice every day, twice a day.

Senator MORAN. And this is the training that occurred in Texas?

Ms. WIEBER. This is training at our own club gyms.

Senator MORAN. Oh, club. OK.

Ms. WIEBER. Yes. So then we would go once a month to the Karyoli Ranch for the National Team Training Camps and you only get that cost covered if you are on the National Team, which is 20 girls. Twelve girls in the country are on the National Team.

And for gymnastics, there's not a lot of money to be made in this sport. You really only get paid if you are a professional athlete and for gymnasts, just because of the nature of our sport, a lot of us peak when we're between like 15 and 18 years old, I would say. A lot of girls want to get a full ride scholarship to compete in college. So they have to not go professional so that they can go get a full ride scholarship in college or you can decide to accept money and endorsements and commercials and take that risk and not be able to compete in college and have to pay your own money through college, which is what I did.

So it's a difficult decision to make because you can't get your full ride scholarship to college and then try to go to the Olympics. That's an extremely rare thing. I think only a couple girls have been able to accomplish that just because by that time, your body's so beat up and just with injuries and everything, you can't handle it.

So there's really not a lot of money to be made in gymnastics until after you become an Olympian. So once you become an Olympian, you can get, you know, commercials and sponsors and those sorts of things.

Senator MORAN. So what's your financial circumstance? I don't mean this in a personal way, but what's an athlete's financial circumstance while going through the training? You said you got a stipend. Are you dependent upon that stipend for your cost of living?

Ms. WIEBER. Well, we're children at the time, so we're living with our parents. I don't know. I'd have to ask my mom.

Senator MORAN. So in that sense, it's your parents who are footing the bill.

Ms. WIEBER. Yes.

Senator MORAN. And that would depend upon a particular athlete's family's circumstance as to whether that's possible.

What I'm trying to get at is the pressure that must arise in your lives, both financially and the desire to succeed. What I was trying to hear from you is what's the relationship that you have with USAG in your case, based upon your desire to succeed as an athlete and based upon the financial circumstances, how important is your relationship to USAG to those two things?

Ms. WIEBER. I would say very important. I think all of our family situations and our parents, we relied on making the National Team every year so we can get that funding to be able to afford because gymnastics is a very, very expensive sport, not only just paying our coaches but all the equipment that's involved and our grips and things like that, and I think where Larry Nassar kind of comes into the situation was we all felt—I mean, I lived in Michigan. He was 20 minutes away from my house. So my parents felt like I was sort of getting special treatment when he would invite me to be treated at his house or, you know, sneak me in the back door of the office where none of the appointments were recorded or notes weren't taken or anything like that.

So my parents sort of thought that was a privilege and I was getting special treatment, not being charged for those appointments and him volunteering his time.

Ms. DANTZSCHER. So my family, we didn't grow up with a lot of money and I had six siblings, four sisters, two brothers, and they all wanted us to play sports and we all did.

We also lived about an hour and a half drive from the gym. So it was a really big sacrifice on not only my parents but my siblings, as well, to keep my sisters and I going to gymnastics and in my mind, even when I made National Team at 12, I know that stipend was so low and anything at that time helped my parents out, but it definitely was a struggle financially all the way through the Olympics and actually my main goal in gymnastics became getting a full scholarship in college because I knew my parents would struggle trying to pay for college.

But, yes, financially it was a struggle the whole time. I mean, USAG, I wouldn't call that really helping much.

Senator MORAN. Thank you, both of you, for what you're saying.

What I am trying to make certain I understand and I believe I do but wanted to confirm is that there is a reliance and therefore your relationship with USAG that is important to you, both to your families' financial circumstances as well as any chance you have to become an Olympic star, is that accurate?

Ms. DANTZSCHER. Yes, you have to, even in any club, any kid to even be a gymnast or have a chance to compete, you have to pay USAG a membership and so as an athlete, we are highly dependent on USA Gymnastics for any chance of anything financial, but we are dependent on them 100 percent for any chance to make National Team, World Team, or Olympic Team.

There's no other pathway to make an Olympic Team without going through USA Gymnastics.

Senator MORAN. The vote has been called and Senator Blumenthal tells me he's soon to leave to do that and that's fine. I will conclude the hearing in just a moment or two.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And I just want to thank all of you for being here today and we look forward to continuing this conversation. Thank you.

Senator MORAN. Violating your earlier statement. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal. Senator Blumenthal and I will continue to work together in a bipartisan way. You saw interest by many members of this subcommittee on this topic, and we're interested in making certain that the testimony that you provided us today is utilized in a way that benefits those who are following you, those who are pursuing the same goals that you've pursued in your life, that they are protected.

I'm going to follow up particularly with the financing circumstance of being an Olympic athlete, but I also think the most important thing that we could accomplish here is the word "system" has been used, systemic, is to determine what the flaws are in the system, such that what I said in my earlier statement about I don't know people who wouldn't report, who wouldn't respond, who wouldn't go to the police, who wouldn't go to somebody and when someone in authority is told to follow through and make a difference.

I don't know human beings who wouldn't respond in a way that apparently which is so different than what your experience was and I want to figure out how we make certain that this is not replicated in anybody else's life.

So my interest in part is about how we make certain that when a perpetrator commits a crime against a young man or woman who is an athlete, there is a consequence such that the behavior stops, the act ends, and that obviously demands reporting and consequences of reporting.

So what I've heard so far in conversations with athletes and the testimony today is we have reporting but no consequence and that's where this needs to have a long time come to an end.

So let me conclude the hearing. I'm not really ready to conclude but the time no longer allows me to continue to ask questions. I will continue to pursue conversations with you, if you're willing.

But I always give witnesses the opportunity to tell this Committee anything that they want to make certain that we have heard and perhaps you didn't have a chance to say in your opening statement or perhaps it arose as a result of a question, but is there anything that you would like to place into the record as something that is important for me and my colleagues to hear today?

Mr. MAURIZI. Real quickly, I know you have to go. If there was some mechanism, something in place where organizations, such as the USOC or U.S. Figure Skating or any of these boards, were mandated to report under penalty of something that's severe, then I think that people would come forward.

I don't think anybody's going to come forward—very few people are going to come forward because they believe it's the right thing to do. I think more people are going to come forward because they're scared of what's going to happen to them if they don't and that seems to be the motivator for—potential motivator.

Senator MORAN. Thank you very much. One of my take-aways from the hearing testimony today is this needs to get to law enforcement because the system that surrounds an athlete is to date insufficient to protect them.

Mr. MAURIZI. The reality is that if the police were allowed to hear my report back in 1998 or 1999, he would have been stopped cold right then and that would be a great solution.

Senator MORAN. Let me make sure I understand that. There's no reason that your report could not have been heard by the police, except it wasn't—

Mr. MAURIZI. Timely.

Senator MORAN. It wasn't timely but not timely in a police sense, not in a law enforcement sense, but not timely in your individual athletic organization's sense, right?

Mr. MAURIZI. Correct on both counts. The organization had an unbelievably ridiculous rule at the time, but even law enforcement—for me, 36 years old was not too old. That's the time when I was able to talk about it and deal with it. The fact that 26 was as old as I was allowed to be in order for it to matter from the criminal sense doesn't seem right.

Senator MORAN. So you were caught in the 60-day rule of your own organization and you were caught by a statute of limitations in which had it been reported to law enforcement, you could not have charged somebody with a crime?

Mr. MAURIZI. Correct.

Senator MORAN. Thank you. Anyone else?

Ms. FARRELL. I want to say thank you. I mean, I felt alone for years and years and years and years and telling my story has not been easy or enjoyable in any way, but, I mean, I never thought I would be here saying this because I never thought anyone would listen. So thank you.

Senator MORAN. You're very welcome.

Ms. WIEBER. I just want to finish by saying thank you, as well, and I just want to add that I think in addition to the reporting things that we talked about, a big message needs to be sent to our National Governing Body, USA Gymnastics, because I still feel like they don't quite understand how this all happened within themselves and whether that means they need to be de-certified or start fresh with a new entity. I feel like they're still not quite understanding the problem and I think our Governing Body has so much power over gymnastics across the country. Whatever happens at these club gyms, they're following suit with what happens at USA Gymnastics, every month at the training camps, and with the selection of the Olympic Teams.

So I feel like that could really be a good solution to helping gymnastics countrywide.

Senator MORAN. One of the things I recall, I think it's from your testimony but recall from someone's testimony today, is while the Board of Directors has changed at USAG, the actual individuals who on a more day-to-day basis deal with athletes has not and that stands out to me as a structural flaw and I appreciate hearing that today. It gives me additional opportunities for pursuing a better outcome.

Ms. WIEBER. Thank you.

Senator MORAN. Thank you. Thank you all very much. I appreciate you saying thank you. I hope that you felt that we were grateful to you for your presence here today and that we want to do things to make certain that your efforts to testify and to pursue perhaps justice in your own life means that others will not encounter the tragedies that have occurred for athletes in the United States under again circumstances that I can't figure out how they could be.

We're going to conclude the hearing. Let me find the papers that give me the magic words.

The hearing record will remain open for two weeks. That means that there may be members of this Committee who ask you questions and you can respond in writing to us. Our Subcommittee members are asked to submit their questions for the record during that time and upon receipt, we would then ask you to respond as quickly as you can to any questions that are presented to you in writing.

That does conclude the hearing and again we've said thank you many times today. I say it again and the hearing is now concluded. [Whereupon, at 4:43 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing.

I say this with no degree of exaggeration to our witnesses before us today: you are courageous heroes for being willing to come forth and tell your stories.

It is hard for many of us to fathom just how badly you suffered from unspeakable abuse in your youth and the pain you likely still live with today.

But by telling your stories here, you are raising public awareness to help prevent such crimes from happening again. By speaking out, you are challenging every responsible adult to be accountable for the children who are under our collective watch in youth athletics.

Responsible adults failed you. The system failed you. As a society, we have a sacred duty to prioritize the safety and welfare of our youth. As a society, we failed in that duty.

It is my sincere hope that we are now at a turning point. In addition to heightened public awareness, Congress also passed the Protecting Youth Athletes from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Reauthorization Act, which I believe will go a long way towards preventing such horrific crimes in the future. I worked with Chairman Thune and Senator Feinstein on this law, and I want to thank them for their terrific work and advocacy.

However, more reforms may be in order.

To be sure, the Center for Safe Sport will investigate and address reports of athlete abuse, and youth sports organizations and National Governing Bodies—such as USA Gymnastics, U.S. Speedskating, and U.S. Figure Skating—will now be required to develop and implement policies and safeguards to protect kids. That's why we should be prepared for more reforms if necessary.

Furthermore, we must make sure that there is full accountability for the actions—or inactions—that were taken in the past. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on all of these counts.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DIANNE FEINSTEIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA

I'd like to thank Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Blumenthal for holding this subcommittee hearing on Olympic abuse and the role of national governing bodies in protecting our athletes.

This is an extremely important and bipartisan issue, and I am very grateful to both the Chairman and the Ranking Member for giving it the attention it deserves.

I would also like to thank the four athletes, Jordyn Wieber, Jamie Dantzscher, Bridie Farrell, and Craig Maurizi for their willingness to come before the subcommittee and speak out about their experiences. These survivors have inspired us on and off the international stage.

They have made our country proud and we have let them down. We owe it to them, and all of the other survivors, to continue to shed light on the failures of those who were meant to protect them, and bring justice to those who have long deserved it.

I'd like to start by addressing the bravery displayed by Jordyn and Jamie, young women who have inspired generations of young girls, and women who themselves were subjected to unspeakable horrors but are now stepping forward as brave survivors.

These remarkable women are among more than 265 current and former gymnasts who came forward to tell of their abuse from Larry Nassar. They have both shown immense bravery, testifying here, at the sentencing hearing of Larry Nassar, and many other places.

It is because of their powerful and deeply personal stories that I first began working on the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authoriza-

tion Act with Commerce Committee Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, and Judiciary Chairman Grassley, to remedy harms done to survivors, and to provide greater oversight and uniformity to how amateur sports organizations handle sexual abuse allegations against coaches and others.

The bill authorizes the U.S. Center for Safe Sport—modeled after the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency—to ensure that aspiring Olympic athletes can report allegations of abuse to an independent and non-conflicted entity for investigation and resolution.

Additionally, the bill provides much stronger legal protections to victims of child sex and human trafficking crimes—ensuring that they have longer to file cases, and ensuring that they be entitled to statutory damages immediately upon establishing that crimes were committed against them.

The bill was the culmination of months of hard work in the Senate and House, and by the many gymnasts and other athletes who championed this bill and advocated passionately for its passage. I was delighted to see it signed into law on February 14, 2018.

And the fact of the matter is: it would not have been possible without Jamie, Jordyn, and so many more survivors who came to speak out.

Despite this accomplishment, we are far from done. Stories have continued to break about the failure of USA Gymnastics to protect its young athletes. Another former Olympian, McKayla Maroney, recently came forward on *NBC Dateline* with more very troubling stories about the organization.

These new revelations are deeply troubling, and I support this Committee’s efforts to investigate what exactly happened at U.S.A. Gymnastics and within the U.S. Olympic Committee. As lawmakers, we must make sure that these institutions are accountable, and that they vigorously and swiftly implement the legislation that Congress has enacted.

So I again would like to thank both Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Blumenthal for their continued work on this issue and for holding this hearing.

And I look forward to the next subcommittee hearing on this topic on May 22, 2018.

Thank you.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JERRY MORAN TO
JAMIE DANTZSCHER

Question 1. The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent investigator, source for reported information and administrator of national prevention and training outreach. Do athletes undergo training on their rights and how to report abuse and how to detect signs of abuse, whether for themselves or on behalf of another athlete?

Answer. No, When I was an athlete, SafeSport was not implemented at all and there was no other training or education for the athletes on how to detect any kind of abuse.

Question 2. National Governing Bodies must “keep amateur athletes informed of policy matters reasonably reflect the views of the athletes in its policy decisions.” As a USAG member, how did the organization inform you of policy matters? Did these policies reasonably reflect the views of the athletes? If not, do you believe the governance reforms that USAG is currently implementing are sufficient to address any shortcomings in this regard?

Answer. USAG policies NEVER reflected the views of the athletes when I was competing. No. I believe USAG is implementing a program like SafeSport more as a publicity stunt rather than seriously taking action to change a system that has failed to protect child athletes for so many years.

Question 3. Even before it was amended this year by the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–126), the Ted Stevens Act imposed specific requirements on NGB’s with respect to training, sports medicine, and safety, which remain in effect today. Specifically, NGB’s are required to “provide and coordinate technical information on physical training, equipment design, coaching, and performance analysis” and to “encourage and support research development, and dissemination of information in the areas of sports medicine and sports safety.” In light of the medical protocols employed by Dr. Larry Nassar in his capacity as a team doctor, and the coaching practicing employed at the USA Gymnastics National Team Training Center, how has USAG’s actions impacted its credibility on these issues? If USAG fully implements the governance reforms it is currently pursuing, do you believe USAG will be prepared to meet its duties in this regard?

Answer. I think USAG provided information only to minimally (if that) meet the requirements of the Ted Stevens Act and such. However, they did not apply or en-

force these policies to ensure the safety of their athletes. Their failure to do so has not only resulted in physical, emotional, and mental abuse to USA gymnasts, it also allowed/enabled Larry Nassar (and many other USAG coaches) to sexually abuse young gymnasts for so many years. USAG failed to even enforce their own policies. (*i.e.*, No man should ever be alone in a room with their underage athlete)

Question 4. Under the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, National Governing Bodies have a general duty “to develop interest and participation throughout the United States and be responsible to the persons and amateur sports organizations it represents.” In the wake of the Larry Nassar scandal, USA Gymnastics is currently implementing a number of governance reforms including those directed by the USOC’s working group. In your view, how has USAG’s handling of the Nassar scandal impacted interest and participation in the sport of gymnastics? If USA Gymnastics’ actions have decreased interest and participation in the sport, do you believe it will be prepared to meet its duty once the governance reforms are fully implemented?

Answer. USAG handling of the Nassar scandal has definitely impacted the interest and participation negatively in gymnastics. Instead of taking any responsibility, they have labeled Larry Nassar as “One Bad Seed” which is clearly not the case. I do not believe that USAG will be prepared to meet its duties with the people there right now because the same culture and mentalities exist. I believe the decertification of USAG is crucial to ensure that significant changes will be made for the future of gymnastics.

Question 5. Related to the culture of USA Gymnastics, there have been assertions that the organization took an aggressive approach of cutting lines of communication between the athletes and their families. One would think that an athlete’s ability to communicate with their loved ones would improve the chances of catching abuse sooner given the familiarity and comfort of discussing sensitive subjects with family. Would you agree?

Answer. I agree. Isolating the athletes is just another way USAG was able to control the athletes and allow someone like Larry Nassar to flourish.

Question 6. In each of your experiences, what were the major impediments to reporting sexual abuse to your respective National Governing Body (NGB), including their affiliated clubs, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and law enforcement? Were there specific instances in which your efforts to report abuse to law enforcement were deterred or impeded?

Answer. I never understood that I was being sexually abused until late Summer 2016.

Question 7. What are athletes looking for in a new President and leadership positions at USOC? Should athletes have more of a voice in these decisions?

Answer. The new President and leaders should put the needs and safety of the athletes first. The athletes should absolutely have a voice in these decisions.

Question 8. Are you aware of any individuals that knew about your abuse and failed to act that is still employed by USOC or your NGB? If so, who are they?

Answer. My personal opinion is that many people knew about the abuse including the Karoylis.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION SUBMITTED BY HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL TO
JAMIE DANTZSCHER

Question. Please explain, at each level of your training, how your NGB or USOC paid for your training, equipment, health insurance, or other benefits. At what level of your training did you receive compensation? How was this amount determined? What opportunities did you have at each level of training to receive compensation?

Answer. Yes, the USOC did pay for training, equipment, health insurance, and other benefits. When you make the National Team you receive compensation in order to pay for training enhancements.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
TO JAMIE DANTZSCHER

Question 1. In your testimony, you discuss the fear that reporting your mistreatment would risk your chances of making the Olympic team. If you had decided to report your abuse, do you believe that there was anyone within USA Gymnastics who you could have trusted to take your concerns seriously? Who would have

prioritized protecting your safety and well-being over the reputation of the national program?

Answer. No, I don't believe I could have trusted anyone within the USAG organization. An athlete representative was assigned to the athletes but I feel they were not helpful. They did not report any issues of concern that were addressed to them. USAG used these representatives as pawns to continue the abuse. There was a fear in speaking up feeling your dreams of an Olympic medal would be taken away. In my opinion, there was no one appointed to make sure we were protected.

Question 2. To your knowledge, is there anyone within your sport's NGB whose job it is to advocate for athletes, rather than the organization?

Answer. Yes, there is an athlete representative. But in my experience, she was not helpful and couldn't be trusted.

Question 3. Do you think you could have benefitted from having an advocate like that at your training facilities?

Answer. Absolutely! But I feel they need to be appointed by an outside source so there is no bias.

Question 4. When you joined the national team, did you have to sign contracts with USOC or USA Gymnastics? What about when you were selected to participate in international competitions, including the Olympics? If you participated in the Kellogg's Tour?

Answer. I only remember signing a USA National Team handbook when making National Team each year from ages 12–18.

Question 5. If you did sign contracts, can you discuss that process—were you able to be represented by a lawyer? Did you feel confident that you understood all the terms of the contracts you signed? Did you feel that you had the opportunity to negotiate the terms of these agreements?

Answer. No, I was not represented by an attorney. No, I was not comfortable signing contracts nor did I have a thorough understanding because I was a child. No, I was not in a position to negotiate the terms of the contract because I was a child.

Question 6. Have any of you ever been asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement related to any aspect of your relationship with the U.S. Olympic Committee, or USA Gymnastics? Have you ever gone through an arbitration process with those organizations?

Answer. No, non disclosure agreement was signed. No arbitration took place.

Question 7. During your time as an athlete, were there any mental health resources or counseling services available to you? Do you think it would have been beneficial for athletes to have access to counseling services or a sports psychologist? Do you think it would have been beneficial if mental health services was a requirement of participation, like training or other medical services are a requirement?

Answer. Yes, there was a sports psychologist and they did not keep our sessions confidential. She was untrustworthy and unethical. A qualified therapist would have been beneficial. Mental health services would have been helpful if required. It would have created dialogue and conversation.

Question 8. If the USOC and the NGB's were required to publish statistics about the number of reports and complaints of sexual misconduct they receive every year, as well as information about their efforts to investigate and resolve those cases, do you think it would help demonstrate to athletes that they are not alone, and that their concerns will be taken seriously? Do you think that making the type of information publicly available would help encourage athletes to come forward if they are experiencing abuse?

Answer. Absolutely! Yes, however it should remain anonymous under the conditions because NGB still control the athletes career.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JERRY MORAN TO
JORDYN WIEBER

Question 1. The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent investigator, source for reported information and administrator of national prevention and training outreach. Do athletes undergo training on their rights and how to report abuse and how to detect signs of abuse, whether for themselves or on behalf of another athlete?

Answer. On the National team we didn't even know it existed nor did we receive any training.

Question 2. National Governing Bodies must "keep amateur athletes informed of policy matters and reasonably reflect the views of the athletes in its policy decisions." As a USAG member, how did the organization inform you of policy matters?

Did these policies reasonably reflect the views of the athletes? If not, do you believe the governance reforms that USAG is currently implementing are sufficient to address any shortcomings in this regard?

Answer. N/A.

Question 3. Even before it was amended this year by the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-126), the Ted Stevens Act imposed specific requirements on NGBs with respect to training, sports medicine, and safety, which remain in effect today. Specifically, NGBs are required to “provide and coordinate technical information on physical training, equipment design, coaching, and performance analysis” and to “encourage and support research, development, and dissemination of information in the areas of sports medicine and sports safety.” In light of the medical protocols employed by Dr. Larry Nassar in his capacity as team doctor, and the coaching practices employed at the USA Gymnastics National Team Training Center, how has USAG’s actions impacted its credibility on these issues? If USAG fully implements the governance reforms it is currently pursuing, do you believe USAG will be prepared to meet its duties in this regard?

Answer. N/A.

Question 4. Under the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, National Governing Bodies have a general duty “to develop interest and participation throughout the United States and be responsible to the persons and amateur sports organizations it represents.” In the wake of the Larry Nassar scandal, USA Gymnastics is currently implementing a number governance reforms including those directed by the USOC’s working group. In your view, how has USAG’s handling of the Nassar scandal impacted interest and participation in the sport of gymnastics? If USA Gymnastics’ actions have decreased interest and participation in the sport, do you believe it will be prepared to meet its duty once the governance reforms are fully implemented?

Answer. N/A.

Question 5. Related to the culture of USA Gymnastics, there have been assertions that the organization took an aggressive approach of cutting lines of communication between the athletes and their families. One would think that an athlete’s ability to communicate with their loved ones would improve the chances of catching abuse sooner given the familiarity and comfort of discussing sensitive subjects with family. Would you agree?

Answer. N/A.

Question 6. In each of your experiences, what were the major impediments to reporting sexual abuse to your respective National Governing Body (NGB), including their affiliated clubs, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and law enforcement? Were there specific instances in which your efforts to report abuse to law enforcement were deterred or impeded?

Answer. N/A.

Question 7. What are athletes looking for in a new President and leadership positions at USOC? Should athletes have more of a voice in these decisions?

Answer. New President who is transparent and someone who put athletes first. Former athletes should definitely be part of the Board not just the one sport they currently have.

Question 8. Are you aware of any individuals that knew about your abuse and failed to act that is still employed by USOC or your NGB? If so, who are they?

Answer. At the time, when I was competing, I never told anyone.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION SUBMITTED BY HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL TO
JORDYN WIEBER

Question. Please explain, at each level of your training, how your NGB or USOC paid for your training, equipment, health insurance, or other benefits. At what level of your training did you receive compensation? How was this amount determined? What opportunities did you have at each level of training to receive compensation?

Answer. If we were on the national team we received a monthly stipend. Only national team members at the top 10 or 12.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
TO JORDYN WIEBER

Question 1. In your testimony, you discuss the fear that reporting your mistreatment would risk your chances of making the Olympic team. If you had decided to report your abuse, do you believe that there was anyone within USA Gymnastics who you could have trusted to take your concerns seriously? Who would have prioritized protecting your safety and well-being over the reputation of the national program?

Answer. I don't believe that there was anyone that I could trust.

Question 2. To your knowledge, is there anyone within your sport's NGB whose job it is to advocate for athletes, rather than the organization?

Answer. We had one athlete rep but she was also on the selection committee, which seemed to me to be a conflict and we felt that if we confided in her, it would hurt our chances to make the Olympics.

Question 3. Do you think you could have benefitted from having an advocate like that at your training facilities?

Answer. Yes

Question 4. When you joined the national team, did you have to sign contracts with USOC or USA Gymnastics? What about when you were selected to participate in international competitions, including the Olympics? If you participated in the Kellogg's Tour?

Answer. I am not sure, It was a long time ago, so I can't remember. The Olympics, we were under age so I am not sure. But the Kellogg's Tour we did sign a contract because we were getting paid.

Question 5. If you did sign contracts, can you discuss that process—were you able to be represented by a lawyer? Did you feel confident that you understood all the terms of the contracts you signed? Did you feel that you had the opportunity to negotiate the terms of these agreements?

Answer. I was young and I don't remember.

Question 6. Have any of you ever been asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement related to any aspect of your relationship with the U.S. Olympic Committee, or USA Gymnastics? Have you ever gone through an arbitration process with those organizations?

Answer. No.

Question 7. During your time as an athlete, were there any mental health resources or counseling services available to you? Do you think that it would be beneficial for athletes to have access to counseling services or a sports psychologist? Do you think it would have been beneficial if mental health services was a requirement of participation, like training or other medical services are a requirement?

Answer. No. Yes, it would have been most beneficial. It wouldn't necessarily have needed to be a requirement but definitely beneficial to have the availability.

Question 8. If the USOC and the NGBs were required to publish statistics about the number of reports and complaints of sexual misconduct they receive every year, as well as information about their efforts to investigate and resolve those cases, do you think it would help demonstrate to athletes that they are not alone, and that their concerns will be taken seriously? Do you think that making that type of information publicly available would help encourage athletes to come forward if they are experiencing abuse?

Answer. Yes, because then athletes would know that if they did report, something would be done. YES

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JERRY MORAN TO
BRIDIE FARRELL

Question 1. The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent investigator, source for reported information and administrator of national prevention and training outreach. Do athletes undergo training on their rights and how to report abuse and how to detect signs of abuse, whether for themselves or on behalf of another athlete?

Answer. To my knowledge, I am unaware of any training athletes receive on what is abuse, types of abuse, or athletes' rights. There was no SafeSport when I was a competitor in Speed Skating.

Question 2. In each of your experiences, what were the major impediments to reporting sexual abuse to your respective National Governing Body (NGB), including their affiliated clubs, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and law enforcement? Were

there specific instances in which your efforts to report abuse to law enforcement were deterred or impeded?

Answer. I was sexually abused at age 15. I did not disclose the sexual abuse to anyone as I did not have the vocabulary to describe what happened. I was fearful of my parents taking me out of speed skating. I feared I would not be believed. I was scared of Andy Gabel's reaction (the man who abused me). Years later, I blamed myself and I did not disclose. When I was finally ready to speak about my child sexual abuse, the minute statute of limitations in NY had expired. I appreciate the efforts of SafeSport. It is my opinion that the USOC and members of Congress should push to extend the statute of limitations in all states.

Question 3. What are athletes looking for in a new President and leadership positions at USOC? Should athletes have more of a voice in these decisions?

Answer. This is a very unique opportunity in the history of the Olympic movement in America. The first question to ask is: Who is the customer? Who is the USOC meant to support? If the USOC wishes to appease the executives and NGBs; business as usual can continue. However, if the athlete is to become the focus, a new business model is required. I strongly encourage members of the recruiting and hiring committee to reach out to Mr. Mark Pfaff. I believe the USOC could benefit from his professional experience and personal moral character. (mwpfaff13@gmail.com or contact Bridie Farrell for his phone number.)

I think that athletes should have a large influence in the NGBs. One amendment to current rules is to redefine how long post-retirement an athlete may still serve. There are hundreds of people who would love to contribute, but are barred based on the limited definition of an athlete.

Question 4. Are you aware of any individuals that knew about your abuse and failed to act that is still employed by USOC or your NGB? If so, who are they?

Answer. I am unaware of anyone who knew about my abuse at the time. It is my belief no one knew even up until I *disclosed on Feb 28, 2013.*

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL TO BRIDIE FARRELL

Question 1. Please explain, at each level of your training, how your NGB or USOC paid for your training, equipment, health insurance, or other benefits. At what level of your training did you receive compensation? How was this amount determined? What opportunities did you have at each level of training to receive compensation?

Answer. I grew up speed skating in Saratoga Springs, NY. In the late 1980s speed skating was free. The Saratoga Winter Club loaned out skates for the season and the city provided ice time. Entering a few races a season at \$10 each was doable for families (\$19 today).

Sometime in the mid '90s the cost of speed skating significantly increased. Before I received any funding from U.S. Speed Skating the cost of one season of speed skating included second-hand equipment, one flight to Nationals, and no physical therapy nor doctors nor specific nutritional needs yet. This sum was more than the total of all my siblings' activities and my non skating activities combined. (Private music lessons for three kids, two kids running track, three of us playing travel soccer, a sister in full-time ballet, etc.)

I think the initial costs are important to discuss as this is a huge barrier to children entering speed skating now.

The formula for athlete funding is fluid and always being tweaked. Funding could come from the USOC or the NGB. I first received payments around 17 as a member of the Jr Team. Below are a few snapshots of funding methodologies.

U.S. Speed Skating devised a point system around 2000. Points were accumulated throughout the season at various competitions (American Cups, Jr/Sr Championships, World Cups, Jr/World Championships). Each skater received a check proportional to the points they earned. On paper this was an equitable pay scale, however, there were a few unintended consequences. Which I'm able to explain if you want further detail. The point system did allow for lower ranked skaters to receive some funding. However the check was usually not enough to cover the cost of attending one competition.

I was fortunate enough to be at the Olympic Training Center (OTC) in Colorado Springs when the B.J. Stupak Grant was still available. Only resident athletes at official training sites were eligible for the grant. This was not based on national ranking, but training site location. For example, I trained at home the year after high school and paid for my college tuition. When I relocated to the OTC, my tuition was covered in the grant. The grant could also be used for off OTC site living expenses.

The top six from U.S. Championships received Level 1 funding from the USOC. My recollection is ~ \$6,000. If someone within the top six retired after the season, the funding would go to the next in the finishing order. If someone said they were skating, they could receive the funding and then happen to retire before the U.S. Championships. Health insurance was included with Level 1. If a Level 1 skater broke her ankle and was unable to compete at the U.S. Championships, she would lose Level 1—the funding and health insurance would be gone. Think about it. Even though the athlete was injured while training and now needed medical care.

For a brief period of time while I was skating, some competitors received blades; I never received blades though. I wasn't ranked high enough. Each skater purchased their own boots, blades, helmets, gloves, glasses, shin guards, sharpening gear, and training clothes. Skin suits were earned at the U.S. Championships.

Sponsorship was a very tricky and, to me, unnecessarily tricky situation. I "owned" a patch about the size of a business card on either my shoulder or breast depending on a the year. I worked hard to obtain sponsorship and fought even harder to accept it. I had to exercise my *athletes' first right of refusal* at times. Even at 20 I found it so ridiculous how the NGB wouldn't work on behalf of the athlete to secure funding or donations. It was a bizarrely awkward topic.

Question 2. How did USA Speedskating and USOC respond to your allegation of abuse by Andy Gabel?

Answer. Individual members of U.S. Speed Skating management and board were mostly empathetic and helpful when I disclosed my story of sexual abuse by Andy Gabel. As a body, U.S. Speed Skating lacked a spine.

The leadership at the USOC has been a disappointment, though, not a shock.

Question 3. Please describe how USA Speedskating, USOC, and the Center for Safe Sport responded to efforts to remove Andy Gabel from the U.S. Speedskating Hall of Fame. How did you feel?

Answer. When I disclosed my story, Andy Gabel was a member of the Speed Skating Hall of Fame and a member of U.S. Speed Skating. Gabel remains a member of the Hall of Fame.

The Center for SafeSport has taken no action to sanction Gabel.

Scott Blackmun, former CEO of the USOC, specifically said he could not aid me in revoking Gabel's membership from a NGB. Blackmun also stated the USOC could not influence the Hall of Fame Membership.

A handful of supportive U.S. Speed Skating Members lobbied hard for the NGB to revoke Gabel's lifetime membership. In the end, Gabel relented, and gave up his membership. U.S. Speed Skating claimed they could not cancel Gabel's membership as he had not violated the Athlete Code of Conduct at the time. (Crime, as a general category, was not listed in the Athlete Code of Conduct.)

U.S. Speed Skating claims no jurisdiction over the U.S. Speed Skating Hall of Fame. The NGB says it is a separate entity. *Gabel is currently a member of the Hall of Fame.* A group of speed skating members is still trying to *remove Gabel from the Hall of Fame.*

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
TO BRIDIE FARRELL

Question 1. To your knowledge, is there anyone within your sport's NGB whose job it is to advocate for athletes, rather than the organization?

Answer. Within U.S. Speed Skating I am unaware of someone dedicated to advocating solely for athletes. However, I believe that many and most of the coaches are advocates for the athletes.

Question 2. Do you think you could have benefitted from having an advocate like that at your training facilities?

Answer. In hindsight, how could things have been different . . .

An individual to whom athletes can disclose information could certainly help. However, when the palpable culture is that of intimidation and fear, no one is going to speak.

On TV, America sees athletes as larger than life, as super humans. However, we are talking about *child* sexual abuse. Children do not have the vocabulary to describe what is happening nor do they have the cognitive ability to recognize the situation. I personally did not know that Gabel's behavior was a crime until I was 26.

Abusers and those who facilitate abuse, need to be held accountable. Adults who molest know they are in the wrong—that is why that told us, the survivors, to be quiet. Adults that are aware of pedophiles in the ranks and look the other way, fa-

ilitate child sexual abuse. As much as the USOC claims to assist in an athlete's growth and success, the USOC has assisted in pedophiles existence.

Question 3. During your time as an athlete, were there any mental health resources or counseling services available to you? Do you think that it would be beneficial for athletes to have access to counseling services or a sports psychologist? Do you think it would have been beneficial if mental health services was a requirement of participation, like training or other medical services are a requirement?

Answer. In my experience, I had access to sports psychologist while living at the OTC. I had a very strong and trusting relationship with the two individuals I worked with. And still, sexual abuse was never discussed.

I do think that athletes would benefit from more psychological support. I can only believe it would help performance. As far as combating systemic child sexual abuse in sports, I don't have the answer. Again, the children do not have the vocabulary to articulate the abuse. There is such fear of retaliation, of disbelief, of loss of ranking (within elite sports).

In my opinion, we need to look at the men with whom we place so much trust and hold the offending parties responsible.

To make the streets safer, we don't put cops on every corner and give the pedestrians helmets—we teach people to drive safer.

It is not the child athlete whose behavior needs to be altered. It is time the grownups grow up and hold peers responsible.

Question 4. If the USOC and the NGBs were required to publish statistics about the number of reports and complaints of sexual misconduct they receive every year, as well as information about their efforts to investigate and resolve those cases, do you think it would help demonstrate to athletes that they are not alone, and that their concerns will be taken seriously? Do you think that making that type of information publicly available would help encourage athletes to come forward if they are experiencing abuse?

Answer. I wholeheartedly support transparency. However, in a culture where child athletes are not able to disclose abuse, publishing a report of zero child sexual abuse will be a disservice. It will make survivors feel more isolated.

I frequently ask myself if an athlete being abused today is more or *less* likely to disclose. Nassar is incarcerated for possessing pornography not for his actions. Even though Gabel admitted an inappropriate relationship in the *Chicago Tribune*, he has suffered no consequences. Updated laws with appropriate statute of limitations would allow survivors of child sexual abuse to disclose.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JERRY MORAN TO
CRAIG MAURIZI

Question 1. The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent investigator, source for reported information and administrator of national prevention and training outreach. Do athletes undergo training on their rights and how to report abuse and how to detect signs of abuse, whether for themselves or on behalf of another athlete?

Answer. Athletes, as far as I know, receive no information whatsoever. There is a chance that Team USA athletes may receive some but if so very minable.

Question 2. In each of your experiences, what were the major impediments to reporting sexual abuse to your respective National Governing Body (NGB), including their affiliated clubs, the U.S. Olympic Committee, and law enforcement? Were there specific instances in which your efforts to report abuse to law enforcement were deterred or impeded?

Answer. The major impediment for me, when I was became mature enough to talk about it, was that I believed the Federation and my coach were in cahoots. The Federation was all powerful and could make or break my career. I really didn't even know that what happened to me was illegal for quite some time. When I attempted to report it to law enforcement they told me the statute of limitations had expired.

Question 3. What are athletes looking for in a new President and leadership positions at USOC? Should athletes have more of a voice in these decisions?

Answer. My dealings with the USOC have been very limited so I am not the best resource to answer this. I will say, however, that too many athletes train in obscurity and the USOC could do a much better job making these athletes and sports more important in the public eye thereby sparking more interest in those sports and eventually getting better results at International events.

Question 4. Are you aware of any individuals that knew about your abuse and failed to act that is still employed by USOC or your NGB? If so, who are they?

Answer. Knew? Meaning had video evidence or pictures? No . . . But “knew” in the sense that they heard the stories and believed there was something to9 them? The answer is YES . . .

There are two “Governing Bodies” for USA Figure Skating coaches. There is our NGB the United States Figure Skating Association and the Professional Skaters Association (PSA). The PSA is the coaching arm of U.S. Figure Skating. They provide education for coaches as well as guidelines for ethical behavior as well as other issues. Even though U.S. Figure Skating would not even hear my grievance the PSA did. I provided them with countless documents and proof but was still denied my relief. Their answer was I did not provide adequate proof. I have provided SafeSport with exactly the same documentation so we shall see how they rule.

To list the number of people who knew of my situation would be to name 90 percent of U.S. Figure Skating and 90 percent of the PSA. My sport is a rather popular one but at the higher levels, the USFS and PSA operate as a dysfunctional family if you will. Sometimes a family likes to keep their secrets because they don’t want to be embarrassed or worse, thrown in jail. Cover ups were the norm and not the exception. The Executive Director of the PSA, Jimmy Santee, told me himself he knew about my abuse and he told me he also was abused but never reported it! The PSA Grievance Committee are all made up of coaches who see each other and work together on occasion.

The current High Performance Director of USFS, a gentlemen named Mitch Moyer, was a coach himself at the Detroit Skating Club (DSC) when Richard Callaghan was hired. He and the DSC Director of Skating Johnny Johns knew of the allegations and rumors surrounding Mr. Callaghan and the Club still hired him because he achieved results with his skaters. Coaches were hired by the Club’s Board of Directors and the President was a man named Drew Paterson. I was told by a student of mine that when Richard was hired in 1992 he was told he was not allowed to ever enter the Boys Locker Room but could still coach!

The number of people who knew or suspected number in the 100s.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION SUBMITTED BY HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL TO
CRAIG MAURIZI

Question. Please explain, at each level of your training, how your NGB or USOC paid for your training, equipment, health insurance, or other benefits. At what level of your training did you receive compensation? How was this amount determined? What opportunities did you have at each level of training to receive compensation?

Answer. My NGB never gave me any money directly ever. When I travelled internationally they paid for my airfare and hotel and sometimes I got a per diem. My coaches airfare and hotel were also paid for by the Federation.

With students of mine the NGB gives a fixed amount of money per quarter depending on your national ranking. The skater was required to perform certain tasks such as participate in Team USA training Camps or do personal appearances etc. or they would forfeit the money. Federation money only goes to International Team members of which there are about 40 or 50 skaters.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
TO CRAIG MAURIZI

Question 1. To your knowledge, is there anyone within your sport’s NGB whose job it is to advocate for athletes, rather than the organization?

Answer. To the best of my knowledge no there is nobody.

Question 2. Do you think you could have benefitted from having an advocate like that at your training facilities?

Answer. Absolutely! That is an EXCELLENT idea! Athletes are the reason we all exist . . . I think a coaches Advocate is beneficial as well. We encounter our own set of issues when dealing with the Federation.

Question 3. During your time as an athlete, were there any mental health resources or counseling services available to you? Do you think that it would be beneficial for athletes to have access to counseling services or a sports psychologist? Do you think it would have been beneficial if mental health services was a requirement of participation, like training or other medical services are a requirement?

Answer. There were resources available but at my own cost. The Olympic Training Center may have had these resources but I was not aware of it. Yes it would be very beneficial for those resources to be available. The challenge would be how

to make them accessible to a broader range of U.S. Figure Skating members rather than just the top athletes.

I'm not sure if mental health requirements should be mandated but it certainly would be beneficial!

Question 4. If the USOC and the NGBs were required to publish statistics about the number of reports and complaints of sexual misconduct they receive every year, as well as information about their efforts to investigate and resolve those cases, do you think it would help demonstrate to athletes that they are not alone, and that their concerns will be taken seriously? Do you think that making that type of information publicly available would help encourage athletes to come forward if they are experiencing abuse?

Answer. ABSOLUTELY! Even more than giving them hope but to let potential perpetrators know the NGB is looking for them and will prosecute them.

By making it public it would most certainly make a victim feel more comfortable with coming forward!

