



Statement of Kerry Perry
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*Hearing before the
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation,
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data
Security*

“Strengthening and Empowering U.S. Amateur Athletes: Moving Forward
with Solutions”

July 24, 2018

Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today.

I want to commend the Subcommittee for its excellent work aimed at protecting amateur athletes from abuse. This is your third hearing in the series, and it is incredibly important, because today we focus on what we are doing to provide a safe and empowered environment for our athletes. As I have said before the House, I will say again today; on behalf of USA Gymnastics, I apologize to our athletes, many of whom are here today. What Larry Nassar did to these incredibly brave women is unconscionable.

I joined USA Gymnastics in December 2017 from outside the sport and the Olympic movement. My primary focus is to transform USA Gymnastics into an athlete-centric organization with a supportive and

empowering culture that helps our athletes achieve their gymnastics dreams in a safe environment. I have heard the heart-wrenching stories of the courageous athletes who have been harmed by those they should have been able to trust. I commit to you that I will keep their words and experiences at the core of every decision I make, every day, as the leader of this organization. Their stories have broken my heart, but also strengthened my resolve.

USA Gymnastics is on a new path, with new leadership, and a commitment to create a culture that puts athletes first. Here are just a few of our decisive actions to put USA Gymnastics on a new course:

- **We closed the National Team Training Center** at the Karolyi Ranch, and we are seeking proposals on a new high-performance training and wellness facility.
- **We hired a new High-Performance Team Coordinator for the Women's Program** through a selection process that involved both athletes and coaches.
- **We created an Athlete Task Force** where our former athletes are helping to shape our organization's future. Just last week we announced the five core members, one of whom is a survivor of sexual abuse.
- **We expanded our Safe Sport department** to include new regional positions to better support, train, educate and serve members.

- **We are extensively revising our Safe Sport Policy.**
- **We are educating and training our staff, Board, and members on the new Safe Sport Policy and a new Ethical Code of Conduct.** I am pleased to report that our staff and Board are 100 percent compliant with both, and beginning this season, all professional members must be Safe Sport certified as a condition of membership.
- **We continue to implement the Deborah Daniels recommendations.** Eighty-six percent of the recommendations are either implemented or in progress. Today I am announcing that we are making publicly available on our website exactly what we have done to implement these recommendations.
- **We made reporting of abuse easier** with a dedicated toll-free number and online reporting.
- **We are participating in mediation** in order to resolve the athletes' claims fairly and expeditiously.
- **We created an Athlete Assistance Fund**, in cooperation with the National Gymnastics Foundation, that provides the survivors of abuse with the needed financial resources for counseling and medical services.

These changes, and others we have made, are part of a cultural shift that reflects our commitment to prioritize the safety of all our athletes and members and to become the standard-bearer for change.

At the same time, I have ideas that I would be happy to share with the Subcommittee regarding what changes Congress might consider to help the USOC and all National Governing Bodies do more to further protect athletes.

I have traveled the country, listening to athletes, survivors, parents, and coaches. My mission is to ensure that USA Gymnastics emerges as a stronger, more empowered organization that is focused on our athletes, so that generations to come will be able to share their stories of how gymnastics positively impacted their lives.

I am testifying today on behalf of the new USA Gymnastics. Our incredible athletes have always been, and will continue to be, a great source of national pride. We will be there for them to help them realize their potential in a safe and supportive environment. Athlete safety must be at the forefront of everything we do, every day.

Thank you, and I am happy to answer your questions.