

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 31, 2018

The Honorable John Thune
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science & Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science & Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

We write to you today to request that the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation hold an oversight hearing on the topic of sexual abuse in youth and amateur sports, specific to the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Over the past week, the American public has been awed and inspired by the exceptional courage of over 150 young women who gave victim impact statements at the sentencing hearing of Dr. Larry Nassar. Last week, he was sentenced to up to 175 years in prison for sexually abusing scores of young athletes over the course of decades of practice in association with USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University.

Although Nassar will be held accountable for his crimes, the American public is still grappling with unanswered questions about the degree to which these organizations were complicit in protecting a predator by creating a culture that prioritized winning over the well-being of athletes. We continue to hear reports that indicate that the organization repeatedly ignored credible complaints from the athletes and even attempted to silence victims who spoke out to expose this criminal activity.

The United States Olympic Committee has demonstrated its intent to require a total leadership overhaul and cultural reforms at USA Gymnastics. While we applaud this action, there have been similar reports of scandals involving USA Swimming and USA Taekwondo that demonstrate that these problems are not isolated to gymnastics. We believe an oversight hearing is necessary to examine the extent to which the institutional culture of amateur sports has facilitated, tolerated, and ignored the sexual abuse of vulnerable young athletes, and to ensure that the national governing bodies of these sports implement appropriate measures to address and prevent such abuse.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Mike Lee
United States Senator