

October 20, 1999 Senate Hearing  
Conducted by the  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Good morning, I am Bill Hybl, President of the United States Olympic Committee.

I appreciate the opportunity to address you today.

I. Background

While the Olympic bid city scandal has captured the majority of recent public and media attention, it is drugs in sport that is one of the greatest problems affecting the Olympic Movement today. For the past 18 months, the United States Olympic Committee has been evaluating whether, and how, it should radically alter the structure of its anti-doping program as one means to better addressing the many issues and complexities associated with ensuring drug-free competition and a fair and level playing field for our athletes. At present, the USOC provides drug testing for United States athletes, except during international competitions. An alternative concept involves “externalizing” all of our drug testing and making it an autonomous activity of an independent organization, completely separate from the USOC.

At the outset, I would like to point out that a principal reason for considering changes to the USOC’s drug testing and education program is the international

view that drug testing of athletes should be done by independent and autonomous agencies. Some have argued that having the USOC test its “own” athletes compromises the entire anti-doping process. While the USOC does not hold completely with this view, we also appreciate that the impact of such a perception must be taken seriously.

Initially, good progress was made in defining key elements of what such an independent organization should look like, but legitimate concerns surrounding some very complicated issues, including governance, athletes’ rights, testing protocols, adjudication and sanctions required the process to move slowly. In June of this year, I created the USOC Select Task Force on Drug Externalization and charged it to take all of these concerns into account and to make a recommendation with respect to externalization.

Members of the Select Task Force include: Frank Marshall, Chair and USOC Public Sector Board Member; Baaron Pittenger, Vice Chair and Chair of the USOC Anti-Doping Committee; Brian Derwin, President, USA Weightlifting; James M. Betts, M.D., Children’s Hospital Oakland; Thomas H. Murray, Ph.D., President, The Hastings Center; Rachel Mayer Godino, USOC AAC Athlete Representative/Figure Skating; Mary McCagg, USOC AAC Representative/Rowing; and Herman Frazier, USOC Vice President, and Evie Dennis, Ph.D., USOC Special Assistant to the President, both serving as liaisons to the USOC

Executive Committee and the USOC President.

The Select Task Force met numerous times and reviewed information provided by the USOC staff, representatives of the two International Olympic Committee-approved United States drug testing labs, United States National Governing Bodies (NGBs), athletes, and United States government representatives. On September 30, 1999, the Task Force submitted its report on Drug Externalization, which has been provided to your staff. On October 4<sup>th</sup>, the Officers of the USOC approved the report for presentation to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of the USOC.

Completing this very complicated work within such a compressed time period was not easy, and I want to complement all the members of the Select Task Force on Drug Externalization for their conscientious approach to developing a program that, if adopted, can certainly have very positive and far-reaching effects on drug testing and education for this country's athletes.

## II. Recommendations of the Select Task Force on Drug Externalization

I would like to briefly highlight some of the key recommendations of the report.

An Independent Organization should be created to conduct a comprehensive anti-doping program in the United States on behalf of

the USOC. This would alleviate the perception, inherent in any system of self-regulation, that the USOC is not doing everything within its power to eliminate doping by U.S. athletes.

Responsibilities would include: testing for prohibited use of performance enhancing drugs; interfacing with all appropriate national and international sports bodies and anti-doping organizations; conducting research in the area of doping, doping methods, and testing procedures and methods; development of ethical principles in the area of drug use; development and promotion of informational drug education programs for U.S. athletes; establishment of a fair, timely and impartial adjudication system; imposition and communication of sanctions when warranted (of note: this would eliminate the current practice of NGBs prosecuting doping infraction cases, an unsatisfactory arrangement that puts NGBs in an adversarial role against their own athletes); and establishment of bilateral and multilateral agreements with other anti-doping agencies.

The Independent Organization would be a non-profit, non-member corporation. Its Board of Directors would be comprised of nine individuals; two athlete members, two NGB members and five members who have no association with the USOC.

As proposed, the USOC would provide an initial capital contribution of \$24 million (\$6 million per year for four years). This amount, if

approved by the USOC's Board of Directors, would nearly double the current \$12.6 million in funding. Each year, \$2 million of the \$6 million would be earmarked for drug research. While this is a significant amount for research, we do not believe it will provide all the funds needed. As a result, the Independent Organization, in cooperation with the USOC, would pursue federal and sponsorship funding to conduct additional research.

The USOC would maintain a broadened, value-based Drug Education program aimed at elementary, junior high and high school age groups as a part of the USOC's general education programs. This effort would include general information on the dangers of drug use for performance enhancement, but would also have a strong ethical message emphasizing fair play and sportsmanship consistent with the ideals of the Olympic Movement.

The Independent Organization, in cooperation with the USOC, would make athletes aware of resources that can assist them in dealing with the short and long term ill effects of doping or in overcoming any drug dependence.

There would be significant increases in no-advanced notice out-of-competition testing. Currently, 5,000 tests are conducted annually. The goal would be to increase this number to 7,000; half with no-advance notice. The Independent Organization would conduct this

testing program and the in-competition testing program. It would also have the authority to conduct tests in addition to those agreed upon by the USOC and each NGB.

### III. Implementation

Our goal is to have the new Independent Organization in place and operating early enough in 2000 to provide independent drug testing at our Olympic Team Trials. The Report of the Select Task Force on Drug Externalization will be presented to the Executive Committee two days from now, and to the USOC's Board of Directors in three days. Assuming approval by both bodies, implementation will begin immediately. The USOC will, however, fall back to the use of its existing anti-doping system if we cannot guarantee a seamless transition to the new Independent Organization in time to support our responsibilities for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

### IV. Conclusion

I agree with the Select Task Force's finding that a new system needs to be implemented in order to enhance the credibility of United States efforts in the area of anti-doping and to resolve some inherent problems within existing

programs. The USOC has committed significant financial and other resources to reach this point, and I believe this proposal goes a long way in providing solutions to the concerns expressed by those involved with the anti-doping effort, worldwide.

At the same time, however, the USOC needs your help. In order for the new Independent Organization to productively participate and contribute to international anti-doping activities, it will need an appropriate designation that can only be granted by the United States government. This would provide the Independent Organization with the legitimacy and identity necessary to interact as an equal with other sanctioned national and international organizations.

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