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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,  
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

July 28, 2021

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave N.W.  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

Larry Nassar committed reprehensible acts of sexual assault against hundreds of our nation's most talented young women gymnasts, including at least one representing the United States at this year's Olympic Games in Tokyo. Nassar is serving up to 175 years in prison after being convicted on multiple counts of child pornography and sexual assault.

The Bureau of Prisons allows federal inmates to maintain deposit accounts.<sup>1</sup> I understand that Nassar has received deposits of thousands of dollars from friends and family while incarcerated in federal prison. My investigative staff discovered that Nassar also received two COVID-related federal stimulus checks totaling \$2,000. These funds afford Nassar the opportunity to purchase special food items, phone calls, and a variety of entertainment options. Recent reporting shows he has spent more than \$10,000 since entering prison.<sup>2</sup>

Although the system administered by the Bureau of Prisons shields inmate deposit accounts from state court orders, Nassar has not complied with his federal financial sentencing obligations. Despite enjoying prison privileges, Nassar will reportedly fail to pay his special assessment of \$5,300 within the prescribed time period in accordance with his plea agreement accepted by the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan.<sup>3</sup> Nassar also owes more than \$57,000 in restitution to the victims of his heinous acts, an obligation that he has so far ignored.

Unfortunately, these facts give the appearance that the Department of Justice places greater importance on Nassar's comfort than on collecting the debt he owes to his victims. This situation sends a troubling message about our justice system's priorities, not only to the athletes he abused but to victims of sexual misconduct everywhere. Continuing to allow a sexual predator to

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<sup>1</sup> Devlin Barrett, *Federal Prisoners Hold \$100 Million in Government-Run Accounts, Shielded from Some Criminal Scrutiny and Debt Collection*, WASH. POST (June 9, 2021), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/bureau-of-prisons-bank-system-2021/06/08/2af9766-e3d1-11eb-8c18-fd53a628b992\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/bureau-of-prisons-bank-system-2021/06/08/2af9766-e3d1-11eb-8c18-fd53a628b992_story.html).

<sup>2</sup> See Devlin Barrett, *Prison Officials Allowed Convicted Sex Abuser Larry Nassar to Pay Little to Victims While Spending Thousands On Himself*, WASH. POST (July 28, 2021), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/larry-nassar-prison-bank-account-2021/07/28/abd6560-ee14-11eb-bf80-e3877d9c5f06\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/larry-nassar-prison-bank-account-2021/07/28/abd6560-ee14-11eb-bf80-e3877d9c5f06_story.html).

<sup>3</sup> See *United States v. Nassar*, No. 1:16-cr-00242-JTN (W.D. Mich. Dec. 7, 2017).

maximize his comfort in prison while ignoring obligations he incurred as part of his sentencing adds grave insult to the injuries sustained by his victims and the entire U.S. Olympic community.

I implore you to review the policies that facilitate this egregious miscarriage of justice and encourage you to implement corrective action as quickly as possible. I appreciate your prompt and urgent attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Wicker", written in a cursive style.

Roger F. Wicker  
Ranking Member  
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee