

HEARING BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE
ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, PRODUCT SAFETY, INSURANCE
AND DATA SECURITY ENTITLED

*"PROTECTING U.S. AMATEUR ATHLETES: EXAMINING ABUSE PREVENTION EFFORTS
ACROSS THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT"*

STATEMENT OF ANNE CAMMETT
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Chairman Thune, Subcommittee Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Blumenthal, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee.

My name is Anne Cammett and I am the President of U.S. Figure Skating. I have been involved with figure skating since I was six years old, first as an athlete, then a volunteer official, committee member and committee chair. I have been a member of U.S. Figure Skating's Board of Directors since 2015. In May of this year, I was elected President.

U.S. Figure Skating is the national governing body for the sport of figure skating in the United States. U.S. Figure Skating is comprised of approximately 700 member clubs and 1000 Learn to Skate USA programs, representing more than 192,000 members nationwide. The mission of U.S. Figure Skating is to provide programs to encourage participation and achievement in the sport of figure skating. We are charged with the development of the sport on all levels, from those learning to skate through the athletes representing the United States on the World and Olympic teams. As the national governing body for the sport of figure skating, we have the jurisdiction to sanction competitions, test sessions and exhibitions; to establish the rules and

guidelines by which the sport is governed; and to name and nominate the athletes who represent the United States in international competition.

U.S. Figure Skating is fully committed to providing a safe, healthy and positive environment for all athletes, members and volunteers. We strongly support the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017. Like social welfare experts, we believe the best practices for protecting minor athletes from abuse are education and awareness training, requiring background checks for people who have frequent contact with minor athletes, and mandatory reporting requirements for alleged and suspected child abuse. U.S. Figure Skating incorporated these practices well before the passage of the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017.

In April, this committee heard testimony from Mr. Craig Maurizi, a U.S. Figure Skating member. During his testimony, Mr. Maurizi referred to his 1999 allegations of sexual misconduct against a former coach. It is true that Mr. Maurizi's complaint was time-barred under the organization's reporting rules in effect at that time. However, Mr. Maurizi's case prompted U.S. Figure Skating to examine its rules and procedures in the area of Athlete Safety. As a result, just months later, U.S. Figure Skating instituted its first ever Harassment and Abuse Policy and a mandatory reporting requirement for all its members. In May of 2000, U.S. Figure Skating added to its official Rulebook that if any form of child abuse is observed or suspected by a member, the member must immediately contact local law enforcement or a public child welfare agency and make a report. In addition, the member must also make a report to U.S. Figure Skating's Ethics Chair. The following year, another new rule mandated publishing the identity of any banned or suspended members in SKATING magazine, later moving a detailed list to U.S. Figure Skating's

official website, where it still resides today. U.S. Figure Skating has acted promptly on every incident reported to it of suspected sexual abuse or misconduct since the new policy was enacted in May 2000. Since May 2000, U.S. Figure Skating has banned 16 members for sexual misconduct, six for financial irregularities, and two for ethical violations.

U.S. Figure Skating has worked to strengthen its Athlete Protection rules and policies for the past two decades. In 2008, U.S. Figure Skating mandated criminal background checks for all coaches requesting a credential for any U.S. Figure Skating-sanctioned event or activity. In 2011, that mandate was expanded to require a coaches' Continuing Education component that included child protection education and awareness. In 2013, as required by the U.S. Olympic Committee, U.S. Figure Skating officially launched its SafeSport Program, consolidating all Athlete Protection rules and policies into one place.

When the U.S. Center for SafeSport opened in March 2017, U.S. Figure Skating aligned its program with the Center's requirements, including expanding the policy for those required to submit to background checks and mandated the SafeSport Training Program for required adults.

U.S. Figure Skating strongly supports the U.S. Center for SafeSport, its mission and all who are dedicated to do everything possible to end abuse in sport. In order for the Center and national governing bodies to reach their potential in doing so, U.S. Figure Skating respectfully suggests the following going forward:

1. Increase funding for the U.S. Center for SafeSport to provide more personnel in the areas of education, investigation and adjudication. Fulfilling the Center's role effectively during these formative years is the key to establishing credibility and long-term viability.
2. Create a coordinated SafeSport public awareness campaign that all national governing bodies can use and support in solidarity. This campaign should be created by experienced child-welfare professionals with a goal to educate athletes, parents, coaches and all who work with young athletes to be vigilant, informed and reactive to all forms of abuse.
3. Provide a national database of banned and suspended persons, searchable by name, sport, state and region.
4. Amend the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act to give subpoena power to the U.S. Center for SafeSport to provide more effective investigations and enforcement.
5. Finally, at some point in the near future, expand the reach of the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Athletes within the jurisdiction of national governing bodies represent only a small segment of youth sports participants in the United States. A full commitment to ending abuse in sports must include children who participate outside the auspices of the U.S. Olympic movement.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this topic. I am happy to respond to any questions members of the Subcommittee may have.