

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



NEWS RELEASE

**Bob Kanaby Addresses U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee Regarding Performance-enhancing Drugs**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (March 3, 2008) — Bob Kanaby, executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), speaking before a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee on February 27, said that steroid use not only threatens the integrity of sport, but even more disturbing are the health risks to young adults.

Kanaby was among the leaders of all high school, Olympic, college and professional sports organizations who spoke at the hearing entitled “Drugs in Sports: Compromising the Health of Athletes and Undermining the Integrity of Competition.” The hearing was called by a subcommittee of the House Committee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection to explore findings of performance-enhancing drug use among athletes at all levels of competition.

Kanaby shared the organization’s structure and purpose with the U.S. House subcommittee, noting that the NFHS is composed of the 50 state high school

associations plus the District of Columbia. He said the NFHS strives to increase participation levels in high school sports, which has occurred for 18 consecutive years; minimize the risks of participation in sports through the publishing of playing rules in 17 sports; and protects and promotes these sport experiences as learning tools for young people to prepare for life.

Following is the remainder of Kanaby's testimony before the U.S. House subcommittee:

"According to studies, more than one million young people in the United States have used steroids at least once in their lifetime. Other studies indicate over one-third of high school steroid users do not participate in interscholastic sports. The most recent data released by the National Institute on Drug Abuse in December 2007 reveals a steady decrease in the use of steroids by eighth, 10th and 12th graders since 2004.

"This statistical improvement is hopefully one indication of a growing awareness among student-athletes of the dangerous consequences of steroid use. Such awareness may be attributed in part to the NFHS' enhanced educational outreach efforts that commenced in 2005 through an initiative titled "Make the Right Choice." The program offers brochures, DVDs and posters for state athletic associations to distribute among their member schools. Separate resources are also available for coaches/athletes and parents.

"Coaches are another segment of the high school community that should be well-informed on the risks associated with performance-enhancing drugs. The NFHS' Coaches Education Program has rapidly expanded in recent years, and 40 state associations have either adopted or endorsed it. The cornerstone of the initiative is to educate coaches on emphasizing 'teachable moments' that arise in the course of interscholastic competition. One 'teachable moment' addresses steroid use, education

and prevention; the module includes a discussion between a football coach and student-athlete on the use of steroids.

“State athletic associations are sovereign entities; they are not subject to the control of the NFHS, and they make their own decisions about steroid testing. In January 2008, the Texas University Interscholastic League announced a two-year program with the National Center for Drug Free Sport, which also conducts testing for the NCAA and two other state associations. Prompted by a \$3 million/year appropriation from the state legislature, the random tests are projected to affect between 40,000 to 50,000 student-athletes by the conclusion of the 2009-10 school year.

“Two other state athletic associations, Florida and New Jersey, have already established testing programs, and both entities also utilize the services of the aforementioned National Center for Drug Free Sport. New Jersey pioneered the testing of high school athletes in 2006-07, targeting five percent of its state championship competitors. Although only one of 500 participants tested produced a positive sample, the association has praised the *deterrent* effects of the program. Florida’s policy is ‘random’ at the individual level, but targets athletes in the sports of football, baseball and weightlifting.

“The Illinois High School Association is the most recent state to adopt steroid testing procedures. In January, its Board of Directors approved a plan effective for the 2008-09 academic year, and similar to New Jersey, testing will be conducted on participants in state finals competitions. A number of other state associations address steroid use without a comprehensive testing plan. For example, Connecticut adopted a regulation that denies athletic eligibility to student-athletes if their respective local school districts discover steroid use. Many other associations, such as the Iowa High

School Athletic Association and Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, distribute educational resources through their Web sites for parents, coaches and students, and many of these materials are provided by the NFHS.

“As previously mentioned, the NFHS has no authority to demand that state associations implement steroid testing policies. Absent a federally mandated and funded program or some other plan, economic pressures will keep many states from adopting testing programs. The consequences of “false positives” are so severe that only the highest quality testing programs are acceptable. Such programs are very expensive.

Conclusion

“For the aforementioned reasons and as educators, we urge that any help from Congress should be focused on a twofold strategy. The first would be to support the deterrent that random testing provides. The second, and very critical companion, is a strong educational outreach designed to support the deterrent with accurate and effective educational initiatives.

“There is much to do on a proactive basis. We can assist with both initiatives and stand ready to cooperate as best we can – with Congress, the professional sports represented here today. Thank you for inviting me.”

Other sports leaders who addressed the U.S. House subcommittee were Bud Selig, commissioner of Major League Baseball; David Stern, commissioner of the National Basketball Association; Roger Goodell, commissioner of the National Football League; Gary Bettman, commissioner of the National Hockey League; Jim Scherr, chief executive officer of the U.S. Olympic Committee; Donald Fehr, head of the Major

League Baseball players union; Paul Kelly, leader of the hockey players association; Gene Upshaw, head of the football players union; Billy Hunter, head of the basketball players association; Myles Brand, president of the NCAA; Travis Tygart of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency; and Alexander Waldrop, chief executive officer of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association.

The panel is considering introducing legislation that would force anti-doping measures on all sports in the United States.

“It’s going to take us a few months to come up with a bipartisan piece of legislation,” said Rep. Bobby Rush (D-Illinois), the chairman of the subcommittee. “The contours of the legislation have not been in any way shaped at this time. Not even in a broad sense. The goal is to ultimately have a national standard, as it relates to HGH and also anabolic steroids.”

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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