

Opening Remarks
Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Hearing:
“Examining Anti-Doping Measures in Advance of the 2024
Olympics”
June 25, 2024

Thank you, Chair Griffith, and thank you to our highly decorated panel of witnesses whose Olympic careers have inspired an entire generation of Americans.

Tonight’s hearing comes at an important moment as we are just one month away from the start of the 2024 Summer Olympic games in Paris.

We will be examining how the World Anti-Doping Agency’s polices—and their failure to enforce those polices—on the use of banned performance enhancing drugs and how that is undermining the integrity of the Olympic games.

WADA REFUSES ACCOUNTABILITY

It is completely unacceptable that World Anti-Doping Agency President Witold Banka [VI-TOLD BAN-KA], whose agency received over 3 million in U.S. taxpayer dollars this past year, declined to join us tonight.

Doping scandals have real effects on our athletes, including American swimmers, who must abide by the strictest anti-doping standards enforced by USADA, and include requirements like random testing.

These anti-doping standards should be applied evenly to ensure a level playing field and that the best athlete wins.

CHINESE DOPING SCANDAL

Recent reporting unveiled that just weeks before the 2021 Olympic games in Tokyo, 23 members of the Chinese swimming team tested positive for a banned substance— Trimetazidine [TRAI-MUH-TA-ZUH-DEEN] or TMZ.

The Chinese authorities dismissed the positive tests, telling the World Anti-Doping Agency this was all a mistake because the banned drug—which is found only in pill form—somehow ended up in the kitchen of a hotel that all 23 swimmers were staying at, and they all somehow unknowingly ingested this banned substance.

The World Anti-Doping Agency's review somehow concluded this explanation was plausible and no further investigation was necessary.

It's important to note that those swimmers won several medals, including three golds.

WADA has consistently failed to be transparent or accept any responsibility for its actions.

And it's not just the US Congress.

WADA also declined a hearing invitation from the German Bundestag [BOON-DA-STAG] that was scheduled earlier this month.

How many more Olympic athletes have to lose out on winning medals and proudly singing their country's national anthem before the World Anti-Doping Agency decides to enforce its rules uniformly?

Everyone watching the Olympics in Paris and in their homes next month should know that the system is not rigged against athletes who compete the right way.

I look forward to hearing from all of you on this important topic.