

sexual abuse. Too often institutions, whether they are our colleges, our military, or, here, in this case, an athletic organization, prioritize preserving their reputations and their brands over the people they protect.

This legislation will require national sports bodies like USA Gymnastics to file reports of abuse as soon as possible. It will establish mandatory training and require the enforcement of policies preventing, reporting, and addressing these kinds of allegations because protecting our athletes must be a priority. Let their dreams come true.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to express my admiration and deep appreciation for the gentlewoman from Indiana for her leadership on this most important bill.

This gives us a chance to do something, which is to give a voice to those victims who have suffered in silence and yet had the courage to come forward and allow others to appreciate the depth of the impact that they have suffered, as well as an opportunity for us to assure that this kind of pattern doesn't repeat itself again.

We know it is a pattern because we have, as has been aptly demonstrated by the speakers before me, stories of young women who have been victimized because they enter a trusting relationship—one between a coach and a person in which that power dynamic is so unique, the young person putting their future in the hands—which is exploited by that person superior in the relationship.

So we now have chance to assure that that trust is not further impacted. But it is not just that relationship; it is the long-term implications of it which are so damaging.

Working with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, we have come to appreciate victims and how the psychological impacts, including things like substance abuse and other kinds of psychological disorders, last for years, and by the courage of coming forward, it does not necessarily end that impact on them.

In fact, it is not just situations like coach and athlete. All kinds of trusting relationships can create a dynamic—one including something that I am currently working on, massage parlors—in which individuals who put themselves in a compromising position find themselves assaulted.

Most recently, I introduced the Duty to Report Act, addressing that kind of a violation of that trusting relationship.

These are examples of opportunities for us to address, once and for all, the implications of people who are allowed to move from one situation to another when reports come forward and stop. We call that pass the trash.

Today, it is time for our body to put forward the kind of legislation that

will assure that there is a duty to report so, along with due process, there can be an internal investigation to assure and reporting requirements so that these individuals are not able to victimize future young athletes, future people who put themselves in the position of trust.

Mr. Chair, I applaud my colleagues who support this legislation, and I ask that we do so with a strong voice from this House.

The CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PAULSEN) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1238. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Health Affairs responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security related to food, agriculture, and veterinary defense against terrorism, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

PROTECTING YOUNG VICTIMS FROM SEXUAL ABUSE ACT OF 2017

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The CHAIR. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1973, which aims to strengthen protections against child victims of sexual abuse.

I am a parent. In fact, today, with me, I have my son, Hudson, and one of my daughters, Ava.

Sadly, over the course of the past couple of years, countless stories of young athletes being abused, including in Indiana, have revealed glaring inadequacies in our law. These stories, many about coaches and doctors and trainers and other adults who have abused their positions of authority and trust to exploit young athletes, are appalling and, as a parent, gut wrenching. Every one of these kids deserved better.

This bill aims to ensure that acts of suspected child abuse are promptly reported to an organization's national governing body to make sure that these cases are immediately disclosed to local or Federal law enforcement authorities. Short of this requirement being codified into law, predatory individuals can continue perpetrating horrific crimes against young athletes with relative impunity.

In addition, this bill requires national governing bodies to develop spe-

cific policies and procedures for reporting sexual abuse cases to law enforcement and to keep track of individuals who leave one facility due to complaints and then go to another facility to repeat that abuse elsewhere.

I want to thank my colleague from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for her important work on this legislation—she is my kids' second favorite Member of Congress—and for her hard work on this important bill to protect kids all across America from abuse.

I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the ranking member on the House Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I thank the distinguished ranking member for yielding.

I thank the chairman of this committee and the manager of this bill, and, particularly, I want to express my appreciation to the bipartisan co-sponsors of this legislation—the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS), the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL)—for coming together around a concept of continuing to work to protect our children; and where we can find bipartisanship, that is really very special as relates to the message to the American people.

The Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act requires that personnel and employees of national governing bodies recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee report suspected incidents of child abuse, including sexual abuse, to law enforcement. The importance of this is to cease, end, stop, never have it again for those victims—never report or hold it for years and years—who are impacted psychologically and impacted for the rest of their life. Really, that is what has been happening in years past.

This bill is intended to protect young athletes who, with great expectation and excitement and challenge and wonderment and aspirations for the Olympics, in their early years, desire to serve their Nation; because when they put their bodies through this rigorous engagement in sport day after day, week after week, month after month, hour after hour, minute after minute, second after second, and deny themselves other extracurricular activities, they do it for the passion of the sport, for their recognition of excellence, but also to go to the Olympics and make their Nation proud.

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And so what we have put them through with respect to not protecting them against sexual assaults severely undermines, again, and irreparably harms them. With H.R. 1973, we have an opportunity to ensure that that never happens again.

The need for this legislation is best illustrated by the ongoing scandal of