

Testimony
of
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to
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Science, Technology, and Space
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Good afternoon. Thank you Chairman Wyden for that introduction. I thank the Chairman and all members of this Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify before you today because it gives me the opportunity to discuss one of the most important civil rights laws in our nation's history: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

As you know, we just celebrated the 30th anniversary of this landmark legislation. Without a doubt, Title IX has opened the doors of opportunity for generations of women and girls to

compete, to achieve, and to pursue their American dreams. I am actually too young to remember personally what schools were like prior to 1972 when Title IX first prohibited schools that receive federal funds from discriminating on the basis of sex.

Back then, it was not uncommon for high school girls to be "steered" to courses that narrowed their future options. High schools routinely excluded girls from classes that stood to give them the skills to compete for higher paying jobs.

Mr. Chairman, you asked me to speak today about Title IX and the sciences—increasing the number of women pursuing degrees and careers in math, engineering, and the hard sciences. Fortunately, I am here to deliver good news.

Society and education have changed since Title IX was passed, and Title IX played an important part. Title IX has contributed to the progress made by girls enrolled in high school

math and science classes. Boys and young men previously dominated these fields to the extent that only an exceptionally gifted and talented female was thought able to take advanced math or science courses. Today, both male and female high school students are making strides in math and science.

By 1999, nearly half of the finalists in the Intel Corporation and Science Service (the competition formerly known as the Westinghouse Science Talent Search) were girls. In 1999, 2000, and 2001, the winners of Intel's largest scholarship were high school girls.

Today, the majority of college students are women. And many are entering professions that once eluded them in the sciences:

- In 1972, only 9% of medical degrees went to women—as compared to nearly 43% in 2000.
- Also in 1972 only 1% of dental degrees went to women—as

compared to 40% two years ago.

- The percentage of computer science graduates who were women doubled from 14% in 1972 to 27% in 1997.
- The percentage of engineering graduates who were women rose from 1% in 1971 to 17% in 1997.
- Among physical science majors, the proportion of women graduates was 15% in 1972 and rose to 37% in 1997.
- Half of all zoology graduates were women in 1997, versus 22% in 1972.

OCR has supported this progress in part through conducting compliance reviews that focus on specific systemic problems. For example, beginning in 1994, OCR conducted fifteen broad-based compliance reviews that examined whether high schools and higher education institutions were discriminating against girls and women in math and science programs. But, there are still areas for improvement. As a society, we must continue to avoid steering girls away from math and science and continue to

meet their developing interest in these areas. But unquestionably, this country has changed, and Title IX deserves to share the credit.

Mr. Chairman, this month OCR will release a new document entitled “Title IX: Thirty Years Later.” Many of these statistics are drawn from that publication, and while it has not returned from the printer yet, I have brought some bound versions of the page proofs for your review.

Thank You. I will be happy to take your questions.