

Statement of Chairman McCain
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Hearing on the State of the United States Olympic Committee
January 28, 2003

- I welcome the witnesses and thank those who made special arrangements to be here.
- The purpose of this hearing is to examine both the recent reports of turmoil within the USOC's leadership and what steps should be taken to address this situation.
- The ongoing feud between Mr. Ward and Ms. Mankamyer has drawn sharp criticism from corporate sponsors, the media, and the international sports community. Among those who have been critical include David D'Alessandro, Chairman and CEO of USOC sponsor John Hancock Financial Services, who called the USOC a "dysfunctional family that keeps electing the daft cousin or uncle to the top job. Their bureaucracy must be blown up and restructured." The head of one Olympic governing body referred to the USOC's leaders as not only "dysfunctional," but "cannibalistic." A writer for the *Boston Globe* wrote that, "[e]verything that happens with the Olympic Committee has to do with ethics, it's just one ethics problem after another." Frank DeFord of *Sports Illustrated* called the USOC, collectively, a "nincompoop." And Dick Pound, a former IOC vice president warns that the current situation is "bad for the United States," and that, "[u]ltimately, if it persists, it will be bad for the Olympic movement."
- The mission statement of the USOC is to "preserve and promote the Olympic ideal as an effective, positive model that inspires all Americans." Recent actions by those charged with leading the USOC, however, have contradicted that mission and tainted the organization's credibility in the eyes of the public. If we are to restore the public's faith in the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), we must resolve conflicts that exist within its leadership, but also reconsider the overall structure of the organization.
- The Commerce Committee oversees Olympic issues and has a responsibility to ensure that the USOC operates effectively. In light of the ongoing problems that exist within the USOC, which may be compounded by the many changes this organization has experienced since it was chartered back in 1978, I am announcing today that this Committee will hold another hearing within the next month to look beyond the organization's current leadership woes. At that hearing, we will examine the structure of the organization with an eye toward reducing the tension that has existed historically between the USOC's CEO and its President, and work to adopt whatever reform measures may be needed. During this process, I hope to rely on the expertise of Senator Stevens, the author of the 1978 Amateur Sports Act, and Senator Campbell. I commend them both for their dedication to the preservation of amateur sports.
- Thank you again for being here and I look forward to your testimony.

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