

# FBI Failure Exposed on National Stage

U.S. Olympians Simone Biles, McKayla Maroney, Maggie Nichols and Aly Raisman testified Wednesday (*warning: video link contains graphic testimony*) before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on the FBI's investigation of convicted sexual felon and former USA Gymnastics team physician Dr. Larry Nassar. The group placed blame squarely at the feet of Nassar and "an entire system that enabled and perpetrated his abuse," Biles said as she choked back tears.

Biles, 24, remains the world's most accomplished gymnast despite her withdrawal from the 2020 Games.

"It feels like questions of responsibility and organizational failures remain unanswered," Biles said in her opening statement. "As you pursue the answers to those questions, I ask that your work be guided by the same question that Rachel Denhollander [the first victim to publicly accuse Nassar of his abuse who also gave a strong Christian testimony during his trial, now an attorney who has represented other survivors in court] and many others have asked: How much is a little girl worth?"

Nassar, 58, is now serving a 60-year federal prison sentence for child pornography and after that faces two additional long-term sentences for sexual assault, which will keep him incarcerated well beyond his lifetime. The Senate hearing follows the July report of an inspector general that found the FBI made "totally unacceptable errors" in its handling of the case.

"I don't want another young gymnast, Olympic athlete or any individual to experience the horror that I and hundreds of others have endured before, during and continuing to this

day," Biles said, adding that during the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, neither USA Gymnastics nor the FBI contacted her or her parents about the bureau's ongoing investigations. Those in charge of ensuring gymnasts' safety "failed to do their jobs," she said.

"Nassar is where he belongs, but those who enabled him deserve to be held accountable," Biles said. "If they are not, I am convinced that this will continue to happen to others across Olympic sports. We suffered and continue to suffer because no one at FBI, USAG or the USOPC did what was necessary to protect us. We have been failed, and we deserve answers."

"It was like serving innocent children up to a pedophile on a silver platter," Raisman said during her testimony.

Maroney, a 2012 Olympian, described Nassar's abuse in detail, explaining that in 2015, at age 19, she described her abuse to an FBI agent during a three-hour phone call. "Is that all?" she said the agent asked when she finished.

"Not only did the . not report my abuse, but when they eventually documented my report 17 months later, they made entirely false claims about what I said," Maroney said. "They chose to lie about what I said and protect a serial child molester rather than protect not only me but countless others."

Only two weeks ago, the FBI fired Michael Langeman, a supervisory special agent with the FBI who allegedly failed to look into the allegations against Nassar, per The Hill.

However, FBI Director Christopher Wray acknowledged the FBI's culpability as early as his opening remarks. "These individuals betrayed the core duty that they have of protecting people. They failed to protect young women and girls from abuse," he said, adding that it's up to prosecutors to determine if the involved agents will face charges. {eo}

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