

TO: Mr. David Cicilline, Chair, Ms. Pramila Jayapal, Vice Chair, and Honorable Members of the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial, and Administrative Law

FROM: Terin Humphrey

RE: Statement by Olympian Terin Humphrey

DATE: July 28, 2021

Statement by Olympian Terin Humphrey

There are extended time limits for sexually abused victims for a reason. A victim has to be mature, have a strong support system, and be ready enough to come forward on their own terms. Bankruptcy courts force abused victims to come forward when sometimes they aren't in the right place in their lives to come forward. Bankruptcy court strips the time limit away from victims when they are entitled to that time deemed fit by the state statute. A victim may not be physically or emotionally be prepared to come forward. Time limits are set in place so that the victim can have the adequate time to heal from trauma and be mature enough to handle the trauma that comes with coming forward. Bankruptcy courts are completely business, and they don't take in account the individual circumstances. Money is their main concern, which is understandable, but money should never triumph over sexual abuse. The courts don't care what you have accomplished and they don't care what you have given, even when you have given most of your life.

Most sexual assault victims are scared to come forward; due to embarrassment, afraid people won't believe them, afraid of being in the public eye, feel guilty, feel like they will be blamed, scared of what their family will say, scared of being known as a "victim," being alone, being judged, and being re-traumatized. To be a sexual survivor is hard enough, but to have a court tell you that your abuse does not count because you missed a deadline is horrific.

Bankruptcy court is like the 2nd abuser all over again. Basically, being denied, being told your abuse doesn't exist because you didn't make a time limit that is set beyond your control. It's a hard pill to swallow that hundreds of athletes in my exact position matter more than I do.

I'm thankful for organizations like CHILD USA who help fight for children every day. This organization believed in me when I was alone and when the bankruptcy court discarded me. Child USA gave me the courage to stand up and fight for the children and for my 15-year-old self that couldn't fight for herself. It's your turn to fight against what's right. Look in the mirror, will you be able to sleep at night. Look into your own kids' eyes and do what's best for them. People and organizations need to be held accountable, no matter what the deadline may be. I may have missed my deadline, but I can look at my daughter in the face knowing that I'm fighting for her if she should ever find herself in my position. What if your kids were in that position? Would you want a court to tell them what happened to them doesn't matter?



As I sit here and watch the Olympics; we are reminded that the children are what matters. One Olympian even stated, “Even if your voice is shaking, speak out.”

I’m almost 35 years old, I’m married, and have a child, but it’s still difficult for me to accept what has happened. Sometimes, I still can’t say it out loud. Do we really expect children, teens, or young adults to be able to speak out?

I’m lucky to have a support system and a small platform to help in some way. I feel in my heart that this is why I’m still standing up, fighting, and not giving up. Please fight for your children.

Terin Humphrey Bio

Terin Humphrey is a retired American gymnast. In 2003, she became a world champion before becoming a two-time Silver Olympic Medalist in the Athens, Greece Olympic Games, and a two-time Hall of Fame inductee. She was the first gymnast inducted into Missouri State’s Hall of Fame. Terin received a full-ride scholarship to the University of Alabama, becoming the 2005 and 2007 individual NCAA Bar Champion, as well as becoming an 11-time All-American athlete.

Terin became a police officer for 4.5 years at Raymore Police Department and served as an Athletic Representative for the Selection Committee of USA Gymnastics, where she assisted in choosing the 2012 and 2016 Gold Medal Olympic Teams. Terin became a full-time gymnastics coach for six years and coached a 2018 J.O. National bar and All-Around champion gymnast. Terin has written a book called “In the Middle,” released a leotard line from HIGO Apparel called “Terin Humphrey line,” and she is now a stay-at-home mother to a toddler and is going to school to study law and public speaking.

For more information, please contact Alice Bohn, Legal Director, CHILD USA, abohn@childusa.org.