Testimony of Rafael Palmeiro
before the
Committee on Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
March 17, 2005

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. My name is Rafael Palmeiro and I am a professional baseball player. I'll be brief in my remarks today. Let me start by telling you this: I have never used steroids. Period. I don't know how to say it any more clearly than that. Never. The reference to me in Mr. Canseco's book is absolutely false.

I am against the use of steroids. I don't think athletes should use steroids and I don't think our kids should use them. That point of view is one, unfortunately, that is not shared by our former colleague, Jose Canseco. Mr. Canseco is an unashamed advocate for *increased* steroid use by all athletes.

My parents and I came to the United States after fleeing the communist tyranny that still reigns over my homeland of Cuba. We came seeking freedom, knowing that through hard work, discipline, and dedication, my family and I could build a bright future in America. Since arriving to this great country, I have tried to live every day of my life in a manner that I hope has typified the very embodiment of the American Dream. I have gotten to play for three great organizations – the Chicago Cubs, Texas Rangers, and Baltimore Orioles – and I have been blessed to do well in a profession I love. That blessing has allowed me to work on projects and with charities in the communities where I live and play. As much as I have appreciated the accolades that have come with a successful career, I am just as honored to have worked with great organizations like the Make-a-Wish Foundation, Shoes for Orphans Souls, and the Lena Pope Home of Fort Worth.

The League and the Player's Association recently agreed on a steroid policy that I hope will be the first step to eradicating these substances from baseball. Congress should work with the League and the Player's Association to make sure that the new policy now being put in place achieves the goal of stamping steroids out of the sport. To the degree an individual player can be helpful, perhaps as an advocate to young people about the dangers of steroids, I hope you will call on us. I, for one, am ready to heed that call.