

December 6, 2012

The Honorable Darrell E. Issa  
U.S. House of Representatives  
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Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Chairman Issa and Ranking Member Cummings:

As the President and CEO of The Partnership at Drugfree.org, an organization dedicated to helping parents prevent, intervene in and find treatment for children with drug and alcohol problems, I write to thank you for holding a hearing in the Committee on Government Oversight and Reform to examine Human Growth Hormone (HGH) testing. The Partnership is committed to encouraging teens to compete in a healthy manner. Ensuring that there is an aggressive testing protocol in professional sports will set the right tone for student athletes. It is our hope that your hearing will advance testing for HGH in professional sports.

As data from the 2011 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATs) demonstrates, teens are watching their favorite athletes and are influenced by their behavior. And while teens understand that there is a risk to using performance enhancing substances and that they may be harder to get, we don't see that changing the number of teens using these substances or reporting that friends use these substances. Some of the key findings from our research include:

- Teen risk perceptions around HGH have decreased significantly since 2008. *About a quarter say they would be more likely to consider trying them if they see successful athletes using performing enhancing drugs.*
- More than 4 out of 5 teens believe there is risk in using steroids that a doctor did not prescribe for them. Levels have remained stable since 2008.
- One out of five teens know someone that uses steroids without a prescription for athletic enhancement.
- Ease of accessing steroids is down 33% since 2008 and have remained consistent year to year.
- Five percent of teens have ever used either Steroids or Human Growth Hormones that were not prescribed to them.

To respond to the problem of performance enhancing substance use, The Partnership at Drugfree.org developed *Play Healthy* (<http://playhealthy.drugfree.org/>), to help parents and coaches talk to teens about healthy competition, including staying away from steroids, stimulants and HGH. And at our Gala in New York City earlier this week we joined with Major League Baseball Charities to honor a student athlete and a coach with the *Play Healthy Award* to commend their leadership in their communities regarding living a drug-free life and competing in a healthy manner. Role models for healthy competition – whether they are student athletes or coaches like our honorees or professional athletes who agree to abide by stringent testing protocols -- are essential if we are going to drive down use of performance enhancing drugs.

Again, I applaud the Committee for taking on this important issue and wish you the best with your hearing next week.

Sincerely



Stephen J. Pasierb  
President and CEO