Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform

Statement from Mr. Willie Stewart
Head Football Coach, Anacostia Senior High School

For the record I want to state that I do not support steroid use by student-athletes. On the high school level the majority of student-athletes want to attend a Division I school. So, the student-athlete feels the need to use performance-enhancing drugs to become bigger, stronger and faster. In other words, some student-athletes want a quick fix. Unfortunately, there are no quick fixes. Meaning, down the road, student-athletes who use performance-enhancing drugs are at risk for premature heart attacks, strokes, liver tumors, kidney failure and other health complications. Really, the long-term affects of this drug use out weigh the immediate athletic advantage the student-athlete achieves.

There were two instances in which I suspected steroid use by two of my football players. I noticed an increase in weight and size. First, I questioned them. I, then, established a counseling program in which a physician, nurse and athletic trainer discussed the ramifications of steroid use.

One of the two student/athletes I suspected of using performance enhancing drugs died 2 weeks ago of kidney failure. He was only 28 years old. His death was just a waste of a human life.

Student/athletes look up to the pro-athlete as a role model. They see themselves in the same position in a few years. The clothes, automobiles, wealth, and prestige are the assets they seek.

Given the seriousness of this issue, I urge coaches to get involved in educating student-athletes about steroid use as well as encouraging them to engage in strength training through normal progression.