

Chair Taylor, Members of the Committee

First off, thank you for allowing me the time to be here today. It is an honor and privilege for this opportunity.

My name is Tyler Maxwell. I am from Manhattan Beach, California and I played in the WHL for 4 years from age 17 to 20.

At the age of 15, I was listed with the Kamloops Blazers. At the time I had not made any plans to play Major junior Hockey, my goal was to play NCAA College hockey and was already being recruited by major Div 1 programs all across the country. My decision to not play College and to give up my eligibility to ever be able to play in College in the U.S. was a decision I made after the Everett Silvertips came calling my parents when I was 16. I was flown up from Los Angeles with my Dad to meet with the GM and coaching staff, tour the facilities and hear the pitch from them for me to come to Everett Washington and play in the WHL.

It was a very convincing presentation, I was told it was the fastest route to the NHL, I was told that players were treated in the highest regard and we were also informed about the so called WHL Education package that would be available to me after I stopped playing and only if I do not sign a pro contract, I could have available to me what amounted to approximately \$12,900 to cover 4 years of education at a University that had to be selected in my city where I reside.

In my case I selected UCLA. It turns out at UCLA \$12,900 barely covers 1.5 semesters. While visiting Everett, I was totally impressed and thrilled with the first class state of the art facilities, the town and hockey program that they had offered. After much consideration and discussions with family and coaches, and much conversations with top D-1 coaches that were hard court pressing me to not go the Major Junior route, I decided to sign with Everett and play in the WHL.

No tryout required, they were very, very interested in me playing for them. I thought I had made the right decision...

I arrived in Everett for training camp in August of 2008 at 17 years old. My first experience away from home, away from my family, living with strangers.

Immediately I had success, scoring regularly and earning a spot on the top line as a rookie, taking abuse from coaches and veteran players aside I had thick skin and persevered. I was also being paid little to nothing for travel to and from games, booster events, photo shoots, radio/TV interviews, school visits, 2 your practice, mandatory dryland training, mandatory video sessions, running on fumes because we couldn't afford to eat. If we did eat it was because our parents sent us money or we finally caved and ate what our house family was provided from the team. Low quality ingredients that a high level athlete shouldn't ingest. There was no limit on how long they could keep you at the rink and did not provide food for us, only water and protein powder/sugary Gatorade.

When I was 17, I broke my knee cap blocking a 100 mph shot from Brent Regner, Vancouver Giants Defenseman, Dallas Stars NHL draft pick, during a 7-1 loss. I took the shot from a professional player. Rumor among players was that he was getting paid under the table from the WHL along with his nhl signing bonus, from a team who was given personal Apple lap tops to every player if they won a playoff round, playing in the pacific coliseum, a professional arena, in front of of 17k people. 50 plus nhl scouts that filled the arena every night. Of course I sacrificed my body for my team, for my opportunity to play in the nhl.

The WHL is a feeder farm league to the NHL. I signed 3 nhl contracts and each time I was cut by an NHL General Manager, I was sent back down to the WHL. It is not an amateur league. We should be compensated.

After my patella cracked, my team trainer forced me to perform squat explosive exercises in the locker room while I was agonizing in pain. He said I was fine and to stop being a "pu**y". To get back out there.. this is when we were losing 7-1 in the 3rd period!

The team refused to provide x rays to me following the incident, they made me play on it for 7 games. I was still scoring so they didn't care what shape I was in.

I demanded x rays by screaming at a coach during practice and getting off the ice early. They finally took me to the doctors and the x rays showed a crack. The doctors couldn't believe i was skating on it.

I still have two pins in my knee from the surgery today, still hurts to walk up and down stairs or squat, or skate.. I had to retire because of my knee and numerous other injuries from the WHL. I have two kids to chase around and a hockey camp to run.. they rushed me back to playing after 4 weeks and little therapy so I could play in the playoffs. My knee still kills me to this day. I toughed it out for the team and ended up setting playoff scoring records my rookie year.

They wanted me back in the line up to help them win their playoff round and sell tickets. People bought my jerseys, bobble heads, autograph photos of me, in our team store. This was not amateur, 8k people in the crowd, away teams fans taunted and verbally abusing you at the top of their lungs.

In 2012 when Everett finally traded me after I broke the scoring record.. my new team, the Edmonton Oil Kings won the league championship against Portland.. I played against the Winterhawk countless times, during the days when the hawks had a losing record all the way until they turned it around and became a power house when they brought in my former LA Kings NHL coach Mike Johnston who was suspended a year, but the team still dominated because of what he built with paying players big money to come. This is not amateur.

They trick 16-17 year olds into signing contracts with fine print and stipulations. Tell them not to use an agent or lawyer because the

In closing, I would just say that my 4 years in the WHL seemed like a rewarding positive experience and I did have some amazing experiences and formed some really great relationships, that I will never forget and always hold dear to my heart. However the expectations put on young teenage players, that are told that they are not amateurs but are expected to perform like professionals but in the end are really just amateurs being given a very small stipend, giving up the ability to ever obtain a 4 year education and play at the highest College hockey level, considering all of the stress and abuse verbal and otherwise, in my opinion is extremely unfair, and a travesty for those who may never have an opportunity to play after the age of 21.

Thank you for listening and allowing me the time to speak to you today.