



PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: LAWRENCE ROBERT
323-236-9992

FEDERAL COURT SUSPENDS MICHIGAN COURT GAG ORDER AGAINST ALLEGED SEX ABUSE VICTIMS

Victims' attorneys Manly, Stewart & Finaldi; Drew, Coopers & Anding, and White Law PLLC win Temporary Restraining Order against gag order issued by Michigan Judge in Dr. Larry Nassar sex abuse case.

Alleged sexual assault victims of Dr. Larry Nassar applauded a decision by United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan Judge Janet T. Neff to issue a Temporary Restraining Order suspending a gag order issued by Ingham County Circuit Judge Rosemarie Aquilina. A full hearing on the issue has been scheduled for April 18, 2017 at 1:30 PM before Judge Janet T. Neff at the 401 Federal Building, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Plaintiffs include Jamie Dantzschler, Rachael Denhollander, Lindsey Lemke and more than 80 alleged victims of sexual abuse by Lawrence Gerard Nassar in various civil actions, as well as the law firms that represent the victims. [Click here to see order.](#)

The lawsuit argued that the victims and their attorneys were denied notice and an opportunity to be heard before the gag order was issued. It further argued that the gag order is so broad and vague as to prevent victims from speaking to law enforcement, legislative bodies, therapists, family and friends about their abuse. The gag order was issued the day after plaintiff Jamie Dantzschler, an Olympic medalist, and other alleged Nassar victims received national media coverage for testifying before the United States Senate Judiciary Committee in support of bipartisan legislation to strengthen reporting requirements for child sexual abuse in Olympic sports.

The decision was praised by plaintiffs Dantzschler, Denhollander and Lemke.

“The culture of secrecy at USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University allowed Dr. Nassar to get away with molesting little girls for more than 20 years. The gag order drew the blinds on the cleansing rays of sunlight that exposed in this horrible episode and began to purify USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University. Now that it has been

lifted, I call upon my former teammates, Olympians and other victims or Dr. Nassar and other abusers to speak up publicly so that this never happens to another child,” said Jaime Dantscher, 2000 Olympics Bronze Medalist.

“We are thankful that Judge Janet T. Neff acted quickly to protect the 1st Amendment rights of sex abuse victims. It is especially disturbing that this gag order was issued by a State Court judge with deep personal and professional ties to Michigan State University, an institution that has long attempted to ignore the crimes of Dr. Nassar and silence his victims. I and so many other women are engaged in a painful legal battle to defend against sexual assaults perpetrated on our bodies, we should not have been forced to engage in a second battle to defend against an assault on our right to a voice. This gag order demonstrates precisely why sexual assault victims rarely speak out – because so often we are forced not only to defend against our attacker, but against the very justice system that we should be able to trust to hold sexual abusers accountable. I hope that in the future, courts will encourage victims of child sexual abuse to come forward, not gag them into silence,” said Rachael Denhollander, “Victim C” in the People of the State of Michigan vs. Lawrence Gerard Nassar.

“It is my belief that a large number of women sexually assaulted by Nassar have come forward, but choose to remain anonymous because of the stigma, controversy, possible retaliation, and other factors associated with having their identity known publicly. I believe that by speaking publicly, we can help prevent future acts of sexual assault against women,” said Lindsey Lemke, current member of the Michigan State University Gymnastics Team.

[Manly, Stewart & Finaldi](#) is California’s leading law firm representing child victims of sexual abuse. The firm has represented more than 150 victims of clergy sexual abuse in California and hundreds of others throughout the United States. The firm also represented plaintiffs in the \$140,000,000 settlement against LAUSD in the Miramonte case, the largest sex abuse settlement against a School District in the US.