



UNITED STATES SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON

**AGING**

RANKING MEMBER KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## **Ranking Member Kirsten Gillibrand's Opening Statement**

### ***“Lessons from the Field: How Sports Medicine Can Improve Health Outcomes for Seniors”***

*Thank you, Chairman Scott, for today's hearing. What an exciting topic that we get to talk about today.*

*It is great that we get to talk about innovative ways that we can incorporate sports medicine into how we care for our older adults, and I am particularly interested in how we can increase physical activity and reduce falls for our seniors.*

*A fall can change a senior's life. One fall can take away a senior's ability to live independently. One fall can make an older American afraid to leave the house, increase loneliness, and social isolation. One fall can create a lot of other health problems.*

*I remember when my grandmother broke her hip. It is a common story. When you break your hip, it changes everything, and you really are afraid of going out. You are afraid of being active. You are afraid of doing all the things you used to do. So, we have to see what we can do.*

*I know, even as I age myself—I am 58—mobility is my number one concern. I have to make sure I have ankle mobility, knee mobility, flexibility, all those things. So, I know how important it is for anyone who is aging.*

*Preventing a fall is more important now than ever. The CDC just released a report this month showing that the death rates from falls for seniors aged 65 to 74 rose more than 70 percent in the last 20 years. But falls are not—are not—a normal part of aging.*

*The good news is many things can be done to prevent falls and optimize physical wellness among older Americans.*

*I look forward to working with my colleagues to support and strengthen programs that help prevent falls and increase physical activity for older adults.*

*This includes strengthening critical Federal funding for programs, including the Older Americans Act, and protecting agencies and entities that perform the work.*

*I am proud to support programs to increase funding for the older American's Act programs, including leading the fiscal year 2026 appropriation's letter for fall prevention programs.*

*I am also proud to support bipartisan Older Americans Act Reauthorization that was reintroduced last week.*

*I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and figuring out how we can make sure people live healthy, active, and fall-free lives.*