

1 MARCH 27, 2007

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3 CHAIRMAN WALTON: Good morning. We are  
4 now ready to proceed with the second day of these  
5 hearings. I would ask everybody to turn off your  
6 electronic devices because it does create a feedback  
7 problem for the audio system. Also, I would ask all  
8 of the witnesses who testify to summarize your  
9 testimony to the extent that you can to give us more  
10 time to ask questions.

11 Again, welcome to the second day of  
12 hearings of the Prison Rape -- National Prison Rape  
13 Elimination Commission. Today we will first continue  
14 to address matters related to sexual assault in  
15 detention facilities in Indian Country. The remainder  
16 of the day, we'll focus on the situation in Texas and,  
17 in particular, the Texas Safe Prison Program and the  
18 current situation involving the Texas Youth  
19 Commission.

20 Some preliminary research that has been  
21 done suggests that the problem of sexual abuse in  
22 detention facilities may be most acute in juvenile  
23 facilities. Obviously, all of us as members of  
24 American society have to be concerned about what  
25 happens to our youth when they are detained and,

1 unfortunately, events recently in Texas would suggest  
2 that youth have been abused in detention and that  
3 obviously is a major concern of this Commission. I  
4 believe that it's important that we give the utmost  
5 effort to try and resolve the problem as it relates to  
6 youth in detention facilities. Because of their  
7 youth, it's inevitable that they will come back into  
8 society and how they come back, obviously, will have  
9 an impact as to what type of individual they are back  
10 in our community.

11                   I believe in the juvenile justice  
12 system because I know it works. Having worked in the  
13 system myself, I know that we can turn the life of  
14 young people around and, unfortunately, when I was  
15 growing up, I went through the system three times and  
16 I ended up all right, so I know it does work. But it  
17 can't work when we have youth who are in detention who  
18 are abused, sexually or otherwise, so it is crucial, I  
19 believe, that we address this issue and, therefore,  
20 today's hearing, both as it relates to the situation  
21 in Indian Country and the situation that exists in  
22 Texas, are both important issues for the Commission to  
23 consider. So, again, we thank you for your presence,  
24 we thank those who are present who will testify. And  
25 I'm sure your testimony will be very essential in

1 helping us during our deliberations.

2                   Our first panel is a continuation of  
3 the panel that we had yesterday dealing with the  
4 problem in Indian Country, and the focus of this panel  
5 will be on the reporting of sexual violence in  
6 Native American facilities and also training efforts  
7 in response to the Prison Rape Elimination Act.

8                   We have three witnesses who will  
9 testify on this panel. I would ask that they please  
10 rise and take the oath.

11                   (Witnesses sworn in.)

12                   CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you. If we  
13 could start on my left and have the three of you just  
14 first identify who you are and then we'll have you  
15 proceed with your testimony after that.

16                   DOCTOR JON PEREZ: Jon Perez, the  
17 National Behavioral Health Consultant for the Indian  
18 Health Service, Department for Health and Human  
19 Services.

20                   CHAIRMAN WALTON: Good morning.  
21 Welcome.

22                   DOCTOR JON PEREZ: Thank you, sir.

23                   MS. CHARON ASETOYER: Charon Asetoyer,  
24 the Executive Director of the Native American Women's  
25 Health Education Resource Center.