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## **BIPARTISAN COMMISSION APPLAUDS FIRST-EVER PRISON RAPE SURVIVOR SUMMIT**

### ***Federal Panel Anticipates Important Input from “Stop Prisoner Rape” Conference***

*Washington, D.C.* – The National Prison Rape Elimination Commission (NPREC) today released the following statement lauding the Prison Rape Survivor Summit to be held in Los Angeles on February 16 and 17, 2007. The event was organized by Stop Prisoner Rape (SPR), a national human rights organization dedicated to ending sexual violence in detention.

“We commend Stop Prisoner Rape for their invaluable efforts to hear and understand the unique challenges faced by the survivors of sexual violence behind bars. SPR has been at the forefront of the national effort to prevent sexual assault in detention. We thank them and all the participants in this important Prison Rape Survivor Summit for their brave and tireless work, and for giving voices to the victims of this serious problem.

“Every year, 600,000 inmates are released into communities across the nation. Those who have been the victims of sexual assault – like all other victims of sexual abuse – will deal for the rest of their lives with its physical and psychological repercussions. Preventing prison rape, and helping those who have been victimized, must be a top priority in every detention facility in the United States. Zero tolerance is the only acceptable standard.

“We very much look forward to receiving the policy recommendations that will arise from this week’s event, and to continuing to work in partnership with SPR and others to ensure that our nation’s detention facilities protect the basic human dignity of all.”

The National Prison Rape Elimination Commission was created by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 and charged with developing zero-tolerance national standards for enhancing the detection, prevention, reduction, and punishment of sexual violence behind bars. Congress found that almost a million prisoners had been sexually assaulted in the twenty years prior to the passage of the Act. The prisoners most likely to be assaulted are first-time, non-violent juvenile offenders.

The Commissioners are federal district judge Reggie B. Walton, who serves as Chairman; Vice Chairman John A. Kaneb, Chairman of the Board of Directors of HP Hood LLC; James Aiken, President of James E. Aiken & Associates, Inc.; Jamie Fellner, Esq., Director of the United States Program of Human Rights Watch; Pat Nolan, President of Justice Fellowship; Gustavus A. Puryear IV, Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of Corrections Corporation of America; Professor Brenda V. Smith of American University's Washington College of Law; and Dr. Cindy Struckman-Johnson, Professor of Psychology at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion.

The Commission will be holding its seventh public hearing, investigating “**Lockups and Native American Detention Facilities**,” on March 26-27, 2007, in Austin, Texas.

To learn more about the Commission, please visit [www.nprec.us](http://www.nprec.us). To learn more about the Survivor Summit, please visit [www.spr.org/en/pressreleases/2007/02\\_13\\_07.asp](http://www.spr.org/en/pressreleases/2007/02_13_07.asp).

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