



# Raising the Bar for safety and justice COALITION

## **The Urgent Need for National Standards Addressing Prison Rape**

The Raising the Bar Coalition (a membership list is on the reverse side) is calling on the Attorney General to adopt without further delay the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission's proposed standards for the prevention, detection, response to and monitoring of sexual abuse in U.S. detention facilities.

### **The Crisis**

In an August 2010 study of sexual victimization of inmates in prisons and jails across the country, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) estimated that at least 88,500 adults held in U.S. prisons and jails were sexually abused at their current facility in the past year alone. In a similar report released in January 2010, more than 12 percent of youth detained in juvenile facilities reported sexual abuse during the preceding year. By comparison, in 2009, the FBI collected reports of about 86,500 forcible rapes in the entire United States (population 310 million).

### **The Solution: The Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 and National Standards**

Raising the Bar Coalition members helped to pass the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003. PREA, which passed both houses of Congress unanimously, created the Commission to review the problem of prison rape and to develop national standards to address it. PREA also charged the Attorney General with promulgating standards based on the Commission's recommendations. The Commission deliberated for approximately five years, held nine public hearings across the country, and organized two public comment periods. Numerous organizations and individuals—corrections officials, practitioners, legal experts, advocates, and prison rape survivors—participated in the process.

In June of 2009, the Commission released its final report and a proposed set of standards. The standards address management issues that affect the levels of sexual abuse in a facility. The standards cover prevention and response planning; prevention; detection and response; and monitoring. Recognizing that different types of institutions have different needs, the Commission created separate standards for prisons and jails, juvenile detention, lockups, and community corrections facilities, as well as supplemental standards for facilities with immigration detainees. PREA required the Attorney General to issue final standards by June 23, 2010. *He missed the deadline.* Final standards may not come out until sometime in 2011.

## Justice Denied

*The Attorney General must enact strong and effective national standards.* These standards will protect the millions of adults and children in corrections and detention settings across the country. Ultimately, the vast majority of inmates return home, bringing their physical and psychological trauma with them. No matter what crime someone has committed, sexual violence must never be part of the penalty.

For more information, please visit <http://raisingthebarcoalition.org/>.

## The Raising the Bar for Justice and Safety Coalition

The mission of the Raising the Bar Coalition is to advocate for the U.S. Attorney General's full and swift adoption of the recommended national standards for the prevention, detection, response, and monitoring of sexual abuse in U.S. detention facilities, as proposed by the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission.

### Raising the Bar Members

- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- American Legislative Exchange Council
- Amnesty International USA
- Black AIDS Institute
- California Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Center for Constitutional Rights
- Coalition for Prisoners Rights
- Correctional Association of New York
- CURE International
- DC Trans Coalition
- Drug Policy Alliance
- End Violence Against Women International
- Equality California
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Gay Men's Health Crisis
- Human Rights Campaign
- Human Rights Defense Center
- Institute for Juvenile Justice Reform and Alternatives
- International Association of Forensic Nurses
- International Federation of Black Prides
- Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Just Detention International
- Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs
- Metropolitan Community Churches
- National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- National Association of Evangelicals
- National Center for Lesbian Rights
- National Center for Transgender Equality
- National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
- National Congress of Black Women
- National Disability Rights Network
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
- National Immigration Justice Center
- National Minority AIDS Council
- New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- National Organization for Women, Combating Racism Committee
- Partnership for Safety and Justice
- Peace Over Violence
- Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape
- Physicians for Human Rights
- Power Over Poverty under Law's of American Restored (POPULAR)
- Prison Fellowship
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)
- Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault
- Rebecca Project for Human Rights
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault
- Texas Civil Rights Project
- United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
- Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
- Women's Refugee Commission

