MARCH 27, 2007

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

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

Some preliminary research that has been done suggests that the problem of sexual abuse in detention facilities may be most acute in juvenile facilities. Obviously, all of us as members of American society have to be concerned about what happens to our youth when they are detained and,
unfortunately, events recently in Texas would suggest that youth have been abused in detention and that obviously is a major concern of this Commission. I believe that it's important that we give the utmost effort to try and resolve the problem as it relates to youth in detention facilities. Because of their youth, it's inevitable that they will come back into society and how they come back, obviously, will have an impact as to what type of individual they are back in our community.

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

Our first panel is a continuation of
the panel that we had yesterday dealing with the
problem in Indian Country, and the focus of this panel
will be on the reporting of sexual violence in
Native American facilities and also training efforts
in response to the Prison Rape Elimination Act.
We have three witnesses who will
testify on this panel. I would ask that they please
rise and take the oath.

(Witnesses sworn in.)

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

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

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Good morning.

Welcome.

DOCTOR JON PEREZ: Thank you, sir.

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