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1 I want to thank you for the opportunity to
2 provide this testimony.

3 CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you very much.

4 Mr. Meyers?

5 MR. WAYNE MEYERS: Good morning. My name's
6 Wayne Meyers, and I'm a staff representative
7 representing 5,000 corrections employees in the
8 state of Connecticut.

9 My duties include arbitration, contract
10 negotiations, grievance processing for our members.

11 My background is I was a retired military.
12 I was involved in corrections in the military. I'm
13 also a retired corrections officer. I worked as a
14 corrections officer for 11 years in Connecticut and
15 retired. And now I work straight for the union.

16 I gave you guys written testimony about a
17 week ago when I was told to send it out here. I had
18 to do it in a day like most of the folks did. And
19 yesterday -- just really listening to testimony
20 yesterday provoked a lot of thoughts.

21 I had an interesting conversation with one
22 of the commissioners on the way back to the hotel
23 that really made me think about some of the things I
24 wanted to talk about.

25 We have only 23,000 inmates in Connecticut.

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1 We have 19 facilities. They range from dormitories
2 to a supermax.

3 We have one women's facility, which is the
4 hotbed right now for sexual misconduct, both inmate
5 and -- excuse me, both on staff -- on for
6 staff-inmate. We have a very minimal amount of this
7 activity, but that's the number one place, is the
8 women's facility where we see staff-inmate sexual
9 misconduct.

10 We are -- we do have cross-gender
11 supervision. We have women in the men's facilities.
12 We have men in the women's facilities. We do
13 cross-gender pat-downs, but we don't do any,
14 obviously, cross-gender strips.

15 I believe our system works pretty good.
16 We've got some flaws. For the most part we don't
17 disagree with management on how things are going.

18 The next place that I would tell you that I
19 worry about is we have a youth facility that houses
20 young kids, 16-, 17-year-old kids mostly, some 18.

21 As of this morning we got 681 in there, and
22 22 of them are 14 and 15 years old because they are
23 found to be unmanageable in the juvenile justice
24 center.

25 I worry about this place for sexual

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1 misconduct. Gangs, a lot of gang activity in there,
2 a lot of young kids who have impulse control
3 problems.

4 I didn't bring any numbers out, and I will
5 tell you why. Because I don't believe the numbers.
6 The agency that I work for can take both sides of
7 any argument in five minutes and give you figures to
8 back it up. So we don't believe the numbers.

9 What you're getting from me is a postcard
10 from the trenches. I spent the whole week before
11 this talking to corrections officers and
12 correctional supervisors who talked to me off the
13 record -- and investigators who talked to me off the
14 record about what they saw in these places, and
15 that's what I bring to you today. I don't bring a
16 perspective from my union or management.

17 I also brought a copy of our training
18 syllabus. I only have one. I'm going to let you
19 have it. We do a preservice of one-and-a-half-hour
20 training for new officers.

21 The agency will tell you that we do an hour
22 yearly in our 40-hour IST. I probed that last week.
23 It's all over the map. Some places get it done
24 every year, other places every other year, some in
25 the third year.

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1 And I'm not trying to throw them under the
2 bus. The training time is really tough. Everybody
3 wants to get in. We want to teach management of
4 aggressive behavior. Everybody thinks that their
5 topic is number one. So it's hard to get the stuff
6 in.

7 I also brought with you (sic) a copy of my
8 collective bargaining agreement. I would be glad to
9 send you more of those if you need them.

10 I -- like my colleague, I do not believe
11 that Garrity or our collective bargaining agreement
12 flies in the face of eliminating prison rape. I
13 think that we work well within it.

14 I would tell you candidly that the folks
15 that I work with as a correction officer are not
16 interested in having people who prey -- sexually
17 prey on inmates working with them.

18 We -- I as a union rep, we give them due
19 process, but they're a safety and security issue to
20 us. And if they are found guilty and did commit
21 this, we're not interested in having them work with
22 us either.

23 I would also tell you that in the state
24 where I work, it's a very low percentage.
25 99 percent of our people come to work every day and

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1 do a good job. Get spit at, have urine thrown on
2 them, and get assaulted. I have been -- I have had
3 all of those done to me. I've also had -- I've got
4 an artificial knee as a result of a fight that I had
5 to jump in to help a young kid who was getting beat
6 bad.

7 So our people get beat a lot. And most of
8 them are real good folks who do a real good job.
9 And sometimes I think we get painted with this broad
10 brush, and I resent it because our folks, for the
11 most part, are professional.

12 I am, again, in favor of the cross-gender
13 supervision. I think that it's a good model. I
14 will tell you that it's my opinion that the addition
15 of female officers into the male facilities has had
16 a calming effect since I have been involved with it.
17 And I think that that was a good idea for us.

18 There were many people who looked like me,
19 old, fat, and bald-headed, who weren't interested
20 when that came about but who are now seeing that
21 this works real well for us.

22 My concerns on training is that it's
23 sporadic and it's not enough. We have a real
24 12-minute dated video that we show new inmates, and
25 I don't think it's enough, on reporting.

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1 I think -- we do have an assessment unit
2 when they come in where they stay 48 hours, and they
3 see a 12-minute video on what to do if there -- you
4 know, if some predator comes along.

5 Again, I tried to pick Commissioner
6 Fellner's brain last night on some of these things.

7 There are some things we can do that don't
8 cost us any money. And the people I work for,
9 that's what they're looking for. They're looking
10 for stuff that we can do that doesn't cost anything
11 because they're straight out with money.

12 One of the things that we can do is do a
13 better identification of both the predators and the
14 victims.

15 I showed -- I met with my deputy
16 commissioner last week, and we talked about that.
17 And if I could just -- just give me one minute to
18 indulge this, I want to explain to you how we do it
19 now.

20 When we get a list of who's coming in from
21 court or who's coming in from the street, we get
22 their name. We run a computer form called the RT 50
23 before they ever get to the facility. This is what
24 it tells us: gives us a name, gives us a race,
25 Social Security number, the first date this person

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1 was incarcerated, the date of the latest
2 incarceration.

3 It tells us next of kin information. It
4 says "Special Management." That would be drugs, if
5 they have a drug problem, or diabetes or a medical
6 problem, it goes under Special Management. It keys
7 us to that.

8 Down further there's another one that says
9 "Profile." And it could say "Latin king," it could
10 say "naeta," it could say "20 love" if they were an
11 active member of a street gang. It could also just
12 say "profile."

13 That keys us when it just says "Profile" to
14 run another form called a 42, which gives me their
15 history. That form will tell me that that person
16 has been a predator in jail based on a discipline --
17 or a victim in jail, based -- it will be in there.

18 It will also tell me things like he
19 testified against his codefendant, don't house him
20 with so and so, so things like that. He was
21 assaulted by so and so at this facility, don't house
22 them together. Those are the things.

23 Obviously they don't want everybody to have
24 access to that, but the system fails in this way.
25 When they come into the administrative processing

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1 room now -- and I was an AP officer for years.

2 We're so busy, and now with -- I think it
3 was the Ninth Circuit decision on the strip searches
4 on misdemeanor people, we've added another piece to
5 it where we can't strip the misdemeanors coming in.
6 So we got to be careful there. We're looking not to
7 get sued on that.

8 So we're very busy. With every facility
9 that we have, we have inmates on the floor in the
10 gym. So trying to house everybody in a perfect
11 place is difficult at this point because we don't
12 have the room.

13 But if that 50 that everybody's got in
14 their hand, that first form that we ran under
15 "Profile," if it said "Housing" -- that's all it has
16 to say. It doesn't have to say victim, predator --
17 just says "Housing," that keys me that I have to run
18 this second form. I have to run it.

19 Because right now if it just says
20 "Profile," we can't get done what we need to get
21 done in an eight-hour shift. It's impossible to do
22 the things that we're directed to do. So the
23 profile doesn't get run until the person gets to a
24 unit and a counselor or treatment officer looks at
25 them.

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1 That's a flaw. I can end up housing a
2 predator with somebody who is slight, whose body
3 weight is nowhere near theirs, who has been a victim
4 before. Possibilities are unlimited.

5 We say it doesn't cost you any money,
6 profile, housing. Now, it keys you. You have to
7 check this. I brought that up last week. We'll see
8 what they do with it.

9 We're looking at other things that don't
10 cost money. We're looking at -- and this is the
11 agency's proactive on -- I have to give them credit.
12 They're proactive on this. We're looking at housing
13 people by body stature in a lot of cases when we
14 can.

15 We're looking and saying, this guy's 250,
16 and he's an inmate for us with a five-digit number.
17 That means he's been doing this since the '60s or
18 '70s. The kid that we're going to put him in with
19 is 130 pounds. It's his first time in jail for DWI.
20 Doesn't pass the common sense test.

21 So we're looking now and the agency's doing
22 that to try and house people by body stature. We
23 think that that, again, will help.

24 The assessment unit we've started, started
25 as a result of inmate suicide, and that has also

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1 helped with sexual assault.

2 We do 15-minute tours in assessment units.

3 I listened to people yesterday talking about
4 one-hour tours. In our normal minimum security
5 units we do half-hour tours.

6 But in all of our assessment units, in all
7 protective custody units, in all gang units we do
8 15-minute tours. The youth facility's all 15-minute
9 tours. That helps tremendously.

10 I also need to make sure you know -- you
11 don't want to talk too much about money, but you
12 need to understand this. When I started doing this
13 job, I was in a dormitory with 76 inmates and myself
14 and one other officer. And these were presentenced
15 inmates anywhere from murder to DWI.

16 Today that same dorm has 114 inmates in it,
17 not 76. And it has one officer. And so that's part
18 of the problem. There's no way around that not
19 being part of the problem.

20 I wanted to talk about our problem with
21 reporting and investigation.

22 Our reporting goes like this. I'm the
23 correction officer. They're not going to talk to
24 me. They're not going to talk to me because they
25 don't want other inmates seeing them talk to me.

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1 There's almost an unwritten rule in a lot of the
2 jails, you don't talk to the correction officer in
3 some hours.

4 But if he's a victim and he comes to the
5 desk and talks to me, it keys people, so he doesn't
6 do it.

7 What normally happens is when he goes to
8 chow, he grabs the lieutenant in the chow hall, a
9 supervisor. Or when the lieutenant makes the rounds
10 in the dorm, he grabs the lieutenant because he
11 knows the lieutenant is going to get him out of
12 there.

13 Now, I'm not sure that that's the first
14 place we ought to start, is with a custody
15 supervisor. I almost wonder sometimes if we should
16 turn them over to medical right now or to some kind
17 of clinician right now before we do anything.
18 Again, problem with that is most of our facilities
19 don't have 24-hour medical. Most of them don't have
20 medical on the weekends.

21 One of the grossest things is that if I'm
22 at Gates Correctional Institute and I get raped,
23 they got to put me in a van and drive me 20 minutes
24 to medical at another facility. When I get there,
25 if they decide they need a rape kit, they're going

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1 to put me in a van and drive me another hour to the
2 contracted healthcare place.

3 So if I have been traumatized like this,
4 I'm now going to make all these trips, lay
5 handcuffed in leg irons to get to a hospital. And
6 this is a result, again, of us having to cut back on
7 medical and taking 24-hour medical out of the
8 facilities and having to move.

9 I wonder if we ought not be doing rape kits
10 on scene. Again, it's cost, but -- or at local
11 emergency rooms. That would be one trip instead of
12 two.

13 Our investigations are done by folks who
14 come up through the ranks. They're captains who
15 yesterday were in a correctional setting as a
16 supervisor, as a manager, and get -- they go to what
17 we call Security Division, which is our Internal
18 Affairs.

19 They show up there the next day, and
20 they're now an investigator. There's no syllabus.
21 There's no continuum.

22 I talked to four investigators that I know,
23 off the record, during this last week or two, and
24 they swear that they're not steered by senior
25 management on investigations and how they should

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1 come out. And these are four people that I believe,
2 and I believe they're telling me the truth.

3 The perception of the folks that I
4 represent is way different than that. It's that
5 they come to a conclusion, and they write an
6 investigation to support the conclusion, that senior
7 management gives them a conclusion and they write an
8 investigation.

9 I would tell you the inmates will probably
10 tell you the same thing.

11 So there's not a lot of respect for those
12 folks, and some of them are friends of mine. But
13 there's not a lot of respect for their investigatory
14 technique.

15 We think -- and, again, I'm not looking for
16 a civilian review board. That to us is almost a
17 double-edged sword. I want somebody who knows the
18 environment, who understands what happens in the
19 environment. But we need people that are
20 professionally trained. We need people --
21 detectives that can detect.

22 And I would tell you that that -- I think
23 that that's our weakest point right now in the
24 process is that investigation.

25 All sexual assaults in prisons in the state

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1 of Connecticut are turned over to Connecticut state
2 police. That's who does them.

3 And I think that that's a good idea. It's
4 an outside agency from us. They look at it. The
5 problem with them is the jail stuff doesn't take a
6 high priority for them. Okay. So because -- and
7 they are, they're busy. They got a whole lot of
8 other things going on.

9 I still think that, all of that being said,
10 that we're better off with them doing it than we are
11 with what we've got now.

12 They've got an agreement. And I checked to
13 see if it had anything to do with Garrity, and they
14 tell me it doesn't. It's just an agreement with the
15 state police that the security division won't get
16 into it administratively until the state police are
17 done.

18 So you don't have two parallel
19 investigations going. You got the state police
20 doing one, which may take a year, nine months, six
21 months. And at the end of that, if the state police
22 say there's no criminality here, we're not going to
23 prosecute it, now I got to start an administrative
24 investigation on something that's over a year old.

25 So that system -- and I would tell you that

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1 we get hurt as much by that as we get helped by it.
2 Okay. It hurts us as much. People talked about
3 having people sent home. We have people sent home.

4 In my testimony I talked about a warden --
5 a warden named Mike Lajoy (phonetic) that's at one
6 of our maximum security facilities down in
7 Connecticut.

8 He -- we had a 19-year-old female -- a
9 19-year female counselor who worked at that
10 facility. She had an exemplary record. She was a
11 professional and well respected. An inmate made an
12 accusation that she was sexually aggressive towards
13 him.

14 It was devastating. I mean, her husband
15 finds out about it. You talked about the
16 confidentiality. Her husband finds out about it.
17 The whole jail's talking about it. There's no
18 secrets in jail. You can say what you want about
19 the confidentiality, you know.

20 If some inmate goes up there and says he
21 was raped, everybody knows in ten minutes. It's
22 just the way it is. If I go up there and say my
23 mother's sick, they all know in ten minutes. It's
24 jail. No secrets.

25 This kid -- it wasn't found -- the

1 allegation wasn't found to not be able to be
2 substantiated; the allegation was found to be false,
3 that he didn't, that it never happened. And this
4 warden had that inmate arrested for making a false
5 statement.

6 Nothing will happen, and we don't care if
7 anything happens, but it made a statement. And we
8 think it's an important statement.

9 Our people are held to a high standard, and
10 we should be. And inmates are responsible for their
11 behavior. And when they falsely accuse one of us,
12 they should be arrested and prosecuted.

13 I would tell you that we see a disparity in
14 the treatment of officers.

15 And, again, I could just tell you my
16 experience with it. We've had -- at the women's
17 facility and at other facilities we've had over the
18 last 12 years numerous, probably a dozen, maybe 15
19 sexual assault staff stuff on inmate at the women's
20 facility.

21 We had a deputy warden that was
22 incarcerated for -- convicted and incarcerated. We
23 had a captain, a lieutenant, three or four officers
24 that were incarcerated as a result of that. I got
25 no problem with that.

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1 Female officers don't get incarcerated when
2 they get caught. They don't get prosecuted and
3 found guilty. And I'm not trying to blame the
4 agency.

5 Let me tell you what happens. We can't get
6 a male inmate to testify that he was sexually
7 assaulted by a female officer. They won't do it.
8 So we don't have somebody to come in and testify
9 that this person assaulted him.

10 So my members look at it and say, ah, yeah,
11 that's the way it is, they let the females alone,
12 and they prosecute the men and put them in jail.
13 That causes us a lot of problems when I try and
14 explain that away.

15 I had some recommendations, and I will shut
16 up. We need to do this profile thing that I talked
17 about, and I'm going to work with the deputy
18 commissioner to try and get that done so we've got
19 them pegged. Everywhere they go, we know who they
20 are and we know what they've done. And, also, the
21 victims, we want the victims pegged so we can house
22 them properly.

23 You know, again, you guys yesterday asked
24 not to talk about money too much. We think we need
25 to staff these places. The places are the county

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1 jails, the youth facility, and the women's facility.
2 They need to be staffed different than normal
3 prisons. These are where it happens.

4 Our county jails, which we're unique that
5 corrections runs the county jails in Connecticut,
6 one of the few states that does that. The county
7 jails are where the high sexual assault rate is, the
8 women's prison's a high sexual assault rate, and I
9 believe that the youth facility is a high sexual
10 assault rate. We need to staff those places
11 differently than we staff the other places. That's
12 money, and I don't think obviously it...

13 The training. I think the training is
14 good, but I will tell you that I polled 20
15 correction officers last week. Two of them knew
16 what PREA was. The other 18 had no clue. So
17 obviously we need to intensify the training.

18 I think it's important that we do a
19 different module for folks that work in the
20 high-risk facilities than the one that we do for
21 everybody. I think that that's important.

22 I also find totally unacceptable that we
23 have a women's facility that the latest edition was
24 built in 1993. It's a combination of a maximum
25 security-celled unit and some old cottages that were

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1 known as the "women's farm" in the early 1900s. And
2 that's kind of what we've got.

3 And there's both sides: One's a lockdown
4 compound, and the other side is roam free. We don't
5 have any cameras in there. There's only two
6 facilities in our state that don't have cameras out
7 of 19. One of them is the women's facility.

8 The agency has asked for bonding. But to
9 have that place where you've got this high risk for
10 sexual assault -- I shouldn't say high risk. It's
11 higher there than it is anywhere else -- and not
12 have the cameras is just absolutely unacceptable.

13 I would tell you that, you know, unions --
14 usually you don't see us jumping up and down, asking
15 for cameras. But I would tell you that those
16 cameras in that women's facility would be as good
17 for us as they are for the inmates. They would show
18 the false accusations for us. And we think that
19 that is horrible that we don't have that. Again,
20 they're trying to bond it.

21 We also -- and, finally, I think that we
22 need to have a better investigatory agency within
23 the department that does administrative
24 investigations. I would tell you that I put on the
25 cases at arbitration, and we beat the hell out of

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1 them at arbitration because of their poor
2 investigations.

3 Thank you for inviting me. It's been a
4 pleasure. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you very much for
6 your testimony, Mr. Meyers.

7 Mr. Harrison, you were the lead
8 investigator, as I understand, in the case that's
9 known out here as the "Booty Bandit" case.

10 And can you tell us about the investigation
11 of that case, what was done right, what may have
12 been done wrong, why there were problems? I know
13 there was ultimately an acquittal of the
14 correctional officers who were charged, but can you
15 give us some insight as to that situation and any
16 other that you want to relate to us regarding the
17 investigation of these type of cases?

18 MR. JOHN HARRISON: Yes, sir.

19 And thanks, again, for inviting me to
20 testify today.

21 Again, my name is John Harrison. I am a
22 special agent, and I am employed by the California
23 Department of Corrections. I am assigned to the
24 Redding Police Department in Redding, California, to
25 a street crimes unit right now.