morning. I'm Professor Cindy Struckman-Johnson from the University of South Dakota. And I have a background in conducting prison rape research.

COMMISSIONER KANE: I'm John Kaneb. I'm from Boston and I'm in private business.

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you.

We will now have welcoming remarks from Mr. Donald Rodriguez, who is area commander of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

And in that position he oversees the operation of four Los Angeles County correction facilities, including the Mira Loma Detention Center in Lancaster, California, which houses an average of 800 to 1,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees on any given day.

Mr. Rodriguez, thank you for your presence. Since you're only making an opening statement, we don't need to swear you, but we welcome you.

MR. DONALD RODRIGUEZ: Mr. Chairman, Members of the Commission, Don Rodriguez, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

I have to apologize. I actually did prepare written testimony.

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Then we're happy to take your testimony.
If you could stand, please.
Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will present to this Commission today will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?
MR. DONALD RODRIGUEZ: I do.
CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you.
MR. DONALD RODRIGUEZ: I currently oversee about half of Los Angeles County's jail system, which includes the Mira Loma detention facility. And rather than read my testimony verbatim, I would like to give you some introduction into what we do and some of the preventive measures that are beginning to take place in Los Angeles County in our jail system.
Mira Loma was opened in 1997 as a contract with the Federal Government. It is run by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department with a captain, lieutenant, sergeants, deputy sheriff personnel, and professional staff.
The staff is about 123 professional staff and 66 sworn police officers, sergeants, lieutenants, and a captain.
It's a minimum security facility. It's a dormitory environment with direct supervision.
There are one custody assistant in every dormitory. We also have deputy sheriffs who serve as prowlers. We meet Title 15 of the California code, minimum standards for jails at that facility also where we do security checks every hour, where two deputies go into the dorm and physically check all of the inmates every hour, as well as the dorm officer.

It's an unlocked compound. They can leave the building. They can go out in the courtyard, which has grass and trees. And then from there they can actually leave and go into a center area which has soccer fields.

The majority of our population tends to be Spanish-speaking with about 80 percent from Latin America or South America. We house generally by where the detainees are from because of the cultural influences there. And a portion of my staff actually speaks Spanish. And with the changes in Los Angeles County in the last few years with the population and our hiring, we're hiring a rather large number of Spanish-speaking personnel.

So the language barrier, at least for the 80 to 90 percent of Hispanics, we provide employees
who actually speak Spanish.

The ones that do not, we have assistance from the Federal Government to allow them interpretation.

We also have lockboxes there so that they can provide comments on our performance without the personnel seeing it. Only the supervisors get those.

And -- but one of the things that I would like to bring forward today is that in one of my jails last year we put in a closed-circuit television system within the jail. That system monitors the activities of all of the inmates and our staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's recorded.

And it can then be downloaded onto a CD-ROM that's encrypted. And we are currently using those images for prosecution of inmate assaults in that jail.

So what it's done for us is that in the past when an inmate comes up and says, I hurt myself, I fell, I cut myself shaving -- and we really know he was assaulted, but he's not willing to discuss that with anybody -- we go back, review the tapes, and we can actually view the assault.
We then go in, identify the suspects, and we charge them with the crime. And we use that as the best evidence.

That has been in place for about a year now. We have about 80 documented incidents. We also monitor our deputy's performance on that. Whenever they enter the dorm or do anything, they're monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. So we can see their performance as well.

I invite you if you ever have time and you're in Los Angeles County again to please come by and see it. Or if you would like to send staff to view it, it's a very -- it's the beginning of a better way of capturing the activities that take place in our -- and, again, in that jail, it's a dormitory environment with 123 inmates in each dorm.

That program is beginning to be duplicated throughout the system. The next step is Central Jail in Los Angeles County which currently houses approximately 4400 inmates.

That program will cost approximately $20 million and will include closed-circuit televisions within the jail system.

As well as that, we're looking at the RFID system for the wrist bands where you can track the
inmate's movements with a wrist band so that we can then compare the video with the actual tracking system so we would know exactly what inmate was in what point at what time.

Again, that is not going to eliminate the problem of assault and rapes in prison, but it will assist us in better documentation and tracking and prosecution of these.

And with that, I'm open to questions.

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Let me just ask, have you had any reported incidents of either staff-on-detainee rapes or assaults of that nature, or inmate on inmate or detainee on detainee, allegations of that nature?

MR. DONALD RODRIGUEZ: Yes, sir, we have. At Mira Loma detention facility since we opened in 1997, there have been no reported rapes of detainees. We have had one incidence of a detainee and a staff involved in an allegation of sexual activity.

That employee resigned from the department prior to being interviewed as part of the administrative investigation. So that's all we've had at the detention facility.