reach any conclusion other than with isolated exceptions. America's prisons are safe and getting safer. We are achieved this through leadership, leadership that values life and respects the law. We can always do better. And as a profession, we aspire to improve. Your support for our efforts by calling on Congress and the states to support the work we do will be deeply appreciated. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner Horn. We'll now hear from the Timothy Ryan.

MR. RYAN: Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, commissioners. On behalf of the American Jail Association and President Robert Patterson in Texas, its leadership and its 4,000 members, I am humbled and honored to be here, especially sitting close to these gentlemen, and certainly in front of you.

I am particularly privileged because I'm sitting before Commissioner Nolan with whom I have come to truly respect his particular insight as we sit together on the Commission of Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons. Of course, it feels a little
different sitting on this side. I'm glad to see you, Pat.

I am here before your auspicious commission today though, and I'm reminded of a story. Apparently G.K. Kesterson, the writer, and several other literary figures, were speaking one evening and they said what book they would prefer if they were stranded on a desert island. The first said the complete works of Shakespeare, the second said I'd choose the Bible, and then someone asked Mr. Chesterson. He said I would choose Thomas' Guide to Practical Ship Building. Mr. Chesterson's comments had some residence with me as I'm speaking before your commission today.

As you are no doubt aware, many of us in jails and certainly the corrections business have been extremely concerned about your commission. When we are in our most defensive postures, we tend to believe or fear that you must consider us poor correctional administrators who somehow tolerate sexual misconduct. However, in my more enlightening periods, I have come to ask for your
help as Mr. Horn has in addressing this issue.
  For me, this is the side I wish to share with you, which is the practical guide to jail administration. For in jails, my experience and that of my peers does not show an out of control system or any sort of belief that sexual misconduct has some sort of prolific basis.

  For example, in 2005, in my jail, we documented three alleged inmate on inmate events, which were criminally investigated, but were determined unfounded. However, at the same time I did have one absolutely founded staff on inmate event, which resulted in a staff termination; therefore, perspective is critical.

  Our system, Orange County, processed 55,000 individuals last year, about 150 per day. As a percentage of activity, these four events that I recognize are incontestable. But let me assure you that as Mr. Horn indicated zero tolerance is the watch word. Even one event is considered a capital offense as far as we're concerned. We treat it with sensitivity, but it is an assertive and
sincere effort and manner that we put forth to
address it.

We have a legal and moral commitment to
provide a safe and secure environment for all that
are in our care. And all with whom I have worked
are committed to insuring that standard is met.

I cannot testify that the 12 million people
that would be processed in American jails this year
will all be safe, nor can I say that I'm so naive
that I would believe things occur of which I am
unaware. However, I will offer your commission
some thoughts that you might consider to minimize
the opportunity for such events to occur no matter
what the truth of the numbers really is. By no
means should this list be limited, but I would
offer the following for your commission.

Every jail should have a clear and concise
policy, including appropriate sanctions outlining
zero tolerance for sexual misconduct by inmates, by
staff or others, should have a clear and concise
law, regulations from the state, and most states
that I'm aware of do have that.
Relative to staff, you must have a solid recruiting and selective process that allows that we assess our recruits to minimize even the possibility of inappropriate behavior. Initial training in academies must give a high priority to the appropriate curriculum to teach and train our recruits and our staff on what the rules are associated with this.

There needs to be annual reinforcement of this training to ensure that the message is clear. Staff need to be fully aware and understand their responsibilities should someone come to tell them about an adverse event of any sort and certainly of sexual misconduct. At the same time, the inmates have a responsibility to be fully aware of the behavioral expectations along with any adverse event. This can include everything from signs on the walls to inmate manuals that outline appropriate behavioral expectations in multiple languages so that everyone knows what the behavioral expectations need to be.

Housing orientation programs must be clear as
to what the expectations are for inmates in any sort of housing environment. And the complaint and grievance process must be clear, must ensure confidentiality and safety and security for any victim and that we pursue that vigorously.

Within all of these, it seems that we must have some special training for our classification staff to make sure that the housing decisions are appropriate, but also for the medical and mental health staff training, along with volunteers, contract personnel and others. And as I look to the future, your commission might take a look at the facility design, its managers and its construction to ensure that there are no secret places, no hiding places for events to occur.

And as from the outside, and from an administrative standpoint, I would ask for your help in allowing groups like the National Institute of Corrections to give us technical support as the group did in 2004 when we had focus groups in my jail, as an administrator just had a comfort level because they came in and talked to inmates there.
and said, how is it, and we went up there and they
felt comfortable when they left.

As Mr. Horn indicated, our prosecutors need to
be educated as well as to why it is important to
prosecute the individuals we bring forth in those
events. I mentioned my particular event with a
staff member. He was not prosecuted.

I would ask you to also engage in the
entertainment industry to advise them on what the
importance is in recognizing the truth in our
events here and the media as well where they have a
tendency to send their least experienced reporter
to the jails and that's where we educate them.

In conclusion, I have outlined several
possible standards for your consideration, but I
would also offer that there are many already in
place. The American Correctional Association and
it's Adult Local Detention Facility Standards has
them. Several states like Florida have them and
for us, it's the Florida model jail standards. And
most jails have policies that are already in place.

I would recommend that you consider those
seriously as a foundation for your direction.

With commissioners like Mr. Nolan I know that you will accomplish your task and we, in the business, will be ready to assume our roles in accomplishing your desires.

It is important for us to recognize the importance of what you do. And as professionalism in this business, we will take your direction and move appropriately with them. I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Chief Ryan.

Let me just avail your concerns that we have a general perspective that administrators in your profession do a poor job and are indifferent to the problem of prison sexual assault. That's just not our attitude. I know it's not mine. And I believe I speak on behalf of all of my fellow commissioners.

I've been a judge for a long time and I have the greatest respect for judges that I knew. Unfortunately, we have a few bad apples and we have some that don't do their job very well. I think that's true for all professions. We don't have
that general view. I have the utmost respect for
your view and other professionals in your field
too.

MR. RYAN: Thank you.