they might serve as a blueprint as a national
guideline that we can discuss and implement.

    Again, thank you for the opportunity. I look
forward to working with you in the future and
answer any of your questions.

    THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner.

Secretary Beard?

    MR. BEARD: Good afternoon. I’m really
pleased to be here today. I spent the last 34
years of my life in corrections and have always
worked to improve the job that we do with the
offenders who have been intrusted to our care. I
believe that we should operate secure prisons,
prisons that are safe for both staff and inmates
and that our prisons should be run humanely. I
also believe we have an obligation to work
constructively with offenders while they’re with us
to enhance the likelihood of their success when
they return to our communities. I certainly look
forward to the opportunity to work with this
commission to advance the correctional profession
in all of these areas.
Since my time is limited today, I am going to focus my opening statement on that part of my testimony that address the Association of State Correctional Administrators or ASCA's performance based measure standards.

As noted in PREA, we have insufficient data on the extent of prison rape. It was also noted that there's insufficient research that's been conducted. ASCA, which is composed of the directors of almost all state corrections departments, a number of large county jails and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, has been acutely aware of the difficulty in obtaining accurate measures of the performance of our correctional facilities, including the extent of prison rape and other violence.

This difficulty exists because different entities measure things differently. I think we heard some comment today from a state that tends to measure everything, and so that state may appear to have a high level of prison sexual violence where other states may appear to have a low level of
violence. But, in reality, that one state may not be less safe and the other state may not be more safe.

In order to address this problem, ASCA formed a performance based measures committee and they did that back in 2001. And I'm the current chairman of that committee. The charge to this committee was to develop consistent, meaningful, performance measures in an automated system to collect and annalize the data. Initial performance standards have been developed with multiple key indicators for each standard. Terms have been clearly defined. And you heard some talk today, I think early on, about the difficulty we had sitting around the room arguing over what an escape was or what an assault was, and it was difficult because everybody looks at things just a little bit differently.

The current standards that we have include public safety, institution safety, substance abuse, mental health and justice. Each standard has performance data that should be of interest to this
commission. So that this commission can appreciate the detail and sophistication of the system, a copy of the latest version of the PBMS was provided with my testimony for you.

ASCA has also developed and pilot tested an automated system to collect and analyze the data on a monthly basis. As well as a web-based portal to host the system. This system allows states to evaluate the performance of their individual institutions and I think maybe Reggie mentioned that when he was up here a few minutes ago and to make true comparisons with other systems as well, which we can't do today. In fact, before that the only way we could try to make some kind of comparisons with other systems is CJI had the corrections year book, and you could get that and try to look at that. But if you looked at those numbers, they were all over the board and they often really didn't mean a lot.

There was initially six pilot states in the system. Twelve additional states have been trained. And by the end of this summer, 28 states,
one large jail system and the Federal Bureau of
Prisons, will be fully involved. I think at that
time, the vast majority of state inmates or federal
inmates and a few county inmates will be involved
in the system. ASCA sees this system as being
dynamic and will continue to develop and improve
it.

Health and education standards, for instance,
will soon be added to the system; therefore, by
later this year we will be collecting a wide range
of data relative to the performance of our prison
system. This data will allow us to better measure
the incidents of prison sexual violence and other
related indicators and, thus, address an important
issue raised by PREA. Better data, which is also
the foundation of better research, will also help
to address this issue raised by PREA as well.

In closing, I would ask that this commission
give consideration to the following: First, ASCA's
Performance Base Measure System is a viable vehicle
to begin collecting data concerning the operation
of our prisons and jails. Additional funding and a
A dedicated source of funding is required to move this project forward and maintain continued operation.

Second, I would ask this commission to begin looking at a broad range of performance measures such as those covered by ASCA's PBMS because these measures all directly relate to facility performance, inmate safety, and as such the extent of prison rape. And what I'm talking about here is a lot of times we're just talking about sexual violence, but I know a lot of talk we were going over here today, you know, the amount of assaults on staff, the amount of assaults on inmates, fights, distances, the amount of suicides we're having in institutions, how many people are locked up in your segregation units for protective custody, the weapon fines. Inmates will take things into their own hands. You'll find more weapons if the institution isn't being run well.

All of these things need to be looked at. And if you'll look at the whole picture, it can help you come to a determination as to whether or not
sexual violence is, in fact, a problem in a particular prison or a particular system.

Third, this commission can open up the debate about the growing population of mentally ill who are confined to our prisons and jails. Just in Pennsylvania in the last four years, we've gone from 14 to 18 percent of our population as being mentally ill. Diversion is the first step that can be taken to protect this vulnerable population.

Fourth, we need transparency, more transparency of our prisons and jail. And to achieve this, we've got to get the public to understand their responsibilities with respect to and the consequences of incarceration. And, again, some of this was covered today. You know, we're locking up a lot of people that probably don't need to be locked you. We're not willing to pay for it in a lot of jurisdiction, and then we don't want the people back when they're coming out, and that whole reentry problem. And, of course, if you divert them on the front end, you don't have to worry about reentry on the back end. So that can
help reentry as well. And I think this commission
can open up that dialogue as well.

Finally, there needs to be some form of
oversight for our prisons and jails. There are
different ways to accomplish this. In doing so, we
don't want to create unfunded mandates, nor do we
want to politicize the process. Whatever
mechanisms are chosen should involve correctional
experts and have some set of standards against
which we can measure performance.

There are many things we can do to make our
prisons and jails safer, you know, having the
meaningful measures of performance so we know
what's going on, the judicious use of high security
units, an objective classification system, a
comprehensive drug interdiction policy, staff
training, cameras, comprehensive mental health
care, community standard health care, good food
service and meaningful programs are just some
example of what we can be doing. Any set of
standards that are set up needs to address
operations in these and other important areas.
The American Correctional Association, which has been mentioned a number of times today has an excellent and comprehensive set of such standards and I think it certainly could be used as a foundation for the creation of such oversight.

I thank you for this opportunity and I certainly welcome your questions.