



MEDIA ADVISORY
February 13, 2019

Contact: Brian Walch
Email: bwalch@usccr.gov
Tel: 202-376-8371

**U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Public Briefing:
*Women in Prison: Seeking Justice Behind Bars***

Friday, February 22, 2019, Washington, DC

On Friday, February 22, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will hold a **public briefing to evaluate the civil rights of women in prison**, including deprivations of medical needs; implementation of the Prison Rape Elimination Act; and sufficiency of programs to prepare women for life after release. The Commission will examine discipline practices and the impact on families when women are jailed far from home or parental rights are terminated despite a caregiving role. Incarceration rates for women have increased dramatically since the 1970's – far outpacing those of men - and investigations have long shown that women in U.S. prisons suffer different experiences and deprivations than men - in a system not designed for them.

Commissioners will [hear from](#) women who have experienced incarceration, state and federal corrections officials, academic and legal experts, and advocates. The Commission will issue a report from this investigation. Confirmed panelists include:

- Susan Burton, Founder, A New Way of Life Reentry Project;
- Dr. Alix M. McLearen, National Administrator, Women and Special Population Branch, Federal Bureau of Prisons;
- The Honorable Brenda P. Murray, Co-Chair, Women in Prison Committee, National Association of Women Judges;
- Kaitlin Owens, Policy Analyst, The American Conservative Union;
- Judith Resnik, Arthur Liman Professor of Law, Yale Law School;
- Brenda V. Smith, Professor of Law, Senior Associate Dean, American University Washington College of Law; Former Commissioner, National Prison Rape Commission; Director, Project on Addressing Prison Rape;
- Dr. Wendy Williams, Deputy Commissioner, Women's Services, Alabama Department of Corrections.

DATE: Friday, February 22, 2019

LOCATION: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 1150, Washington, DC 20425 (Also [live-streaming](#))

AGENDA: Invited Panelists: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm Eastern Time (ET)
[Open Comment Session](#) (Public Testimony): 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Chair Catherine E. Lhamon will be available for press interviews.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. For information about the Commission, please visit www.usccr.gov and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).