



PRESS RELEASE
February 20, 2019

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U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Public Briefing:
Women in Prison: Seeking Justice Behind Bars
Friday, February 22, 2019

1331 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, National Place Building, Ste. 1150, Washington, DC 20425
Also [live-streaming](#)

Expert [Panels](#): 9:00 am – 4:00 pm ET
Public Comment [Session](#): 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm ET

On Friday, February 22, in Washington, DC, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will hold a **public briefing to evaluate civil rights of women in prison**, including deprivations of women’s medical needs that may violate the constitutional requirement to provide adequate medical care for all prisoners; implementation of the Prison Rape Elimination Act; and the sufficiency of programs to meet women’s needs after release. The Commission will examine consequences of discipline practices in women’s prisons and the impact on families when women are placed far from home or parental rights are terminated despite their caregiving role.

Chair Catherine E. Lhamon said, “The United States has close to one-third of the world’s total incarcerated women, even though our country only has 5% of the world’s women. I look forward to receiving testimony about the experiences and conditions of confinement for women in prison, so the Commission can offer recommendations regarding adequate safeguards for the civil rights of incarcerated women.”

Commissioners will hear from women who have experienced incarceration, state and federal corrections officials, academic and legal experts, and advocates. Members of the public will be able to address the Commission in an [open comment session](#). The Commission will accept written materials for consideration as we prepare our report; submit to womeninprison@usccr.gov no later than March 25, 2019.

[AGENDA](#)

Introductory Remarks: Chair Catherine E. Lhamon: 9:00 am - 9:10 am

Panel One: Overview of Women in Prison: Statistics, Constitutional Protections, Classification, and Family Disruption: 9:10 am - 10:40 am

- **Dr. Alix M. McLearen**, National Administrator, Women and Special Population Branch, Federal Bureau of Prisons
- **Kaitlin Owens**, Policy Analyst, The American Conservative Union
- **Dr. Emily J. Salisbury**, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- **Emily Mooney**, Criminal Justice Policy Associate, R Street Institute
- **Pamela Winn**, Founder and Executive Director, Restore HER

Break: 10:40 am - 10:50 am

Panel Two: An Analysis of Women's Health, Personal Dignity, and Sexual Abuse in the U.S. Prison System: 10:50 am - 12:10 pm

- **Julie Abbate**, National Advocacy Director, Just Detention International
- **Andie Moss**, Founder, The Moss Group
- **Dr. Jaimie Meyer**, Assistant Professor of Medicine and Assistant Clinical Professor of Nursing, Yale University School of Medicine
- **Dr. Carolyn Sufrin**, Assistant Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Johns Hopkins Medicine
- **Betsy Ginsberg**, Clinical Associate Professor of Law and Director of the Civil Rights Clinic, Cardozo School of Law
- **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

Break: 12:10 pm - 1:10 pm

Panel Three: Review of Treatment of Women While Incarcerated: 1:10 pm - 2:30 pm

- **Lashonia Thompson-El**, Executive Director, W.I.R.E. (Women Involved in Reentry Efforts)
- **Judith Resnik**, Arthur Liman Professor of Law, Yale Law School
- **Leann K. Bertsch**, Director of Corrections and Rehabilitation, North Dakota Department of Corrections
- **Jessica Pupovac**, Freelance Reporter
- **Dr. Wendy Williams**, Deputy Commissioner of Women's Services, Alabama Department of Corrections

Break: 2:30 pm - 2:40 pm

Panel Four: Rehabilitative Opportunities for Women in Prison & Life After Prison: 2:40 pm - 4:00 pm

- **Chief Wendy Still**, Chief Probation Officer, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Honorable Brenda P. Murray**, Co-Chair Women in Prison Committee, National Association of Women Judges

- **Becki Ney**, Principal, The Center for Effective Public Policy
- **Susan Burton**, Founder, A New Way of Life Reentry Project
- **Brett Dignam**, Vice Dean of Experiential Education and Clinical Professor of Law, Columbia Law School

Break: 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Open Public Comment Session: 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Members of the public who wish to address the Commission will have an opportunity to do so. Each individual will have up to three (3) minutes to speak, with spots allotted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Individuals will be able to register for open comment session speaking slots, both online and in-person at the briefing. *Full information at: <https://www.usccr.gov/press/2019/02-13-Women-in-Prison.pdf>.*

The briefing will also [live-stream](#).

Panelists' submitted written testimony available [here](#).

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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. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit www.usccr.gov and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).