

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS Eastern Regional Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Hampshire State Advisory Committee to Convene Briefing on Gender Disparities in Treatment in N.H. Prisons

**What: New Hampshire State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
Public Briefing**

When: Friday, March 12, 2010, 9:30 a.m. ET

**Where: Legislative Office Building, Rooms 207-209
33 North State Street
Concord, New Hampshire**

CONCORD, NH, -- The New Hampshire State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will convene a briefing to hear from government officials, advocates, and the community to gather information on gender disparities in treatment and services in the New Hampshire prison system.

The State of New Hampshire has long struggled to address the needs of female prisoners. In the late 1980s, in response to a federal court order, New Hampshire opened the Women's Prison in Goffstown as a temporary facility to house female offenders; prior to that, women were sent to out-of-state correctional facilities. Twenty years later, the temporary Goffstown facility is still in use and there are concerns that it may not meet the basic needs of New Hampshire's growing population of female offenders, including whether vocational training opportunities available to male offenders are similarly available to females. "The Constitution, as well as sound public policy, requires that men and women in New Hampshire's correctional system receive comparable treatment with respect to basic services and programs," states Jordan Budd, Chairman of the New Hampshire State Advisory Committee. "If the state is not meeting this obligation, it will have grave consequences for incarcerated women. Our Committee believes it is important to shine the light on this issue."

The New Hampshire State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Congress has directed the Commission to establish advisory committees in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, whose members serve without compensation. State committees receive reports, suggestions, and recommendations from individuals, public officials, and representatives of public and private organizations in response to committee inquiries. The SACs' reports to the Commission are wholly independent, and are reviewed by Commission staff only for legal and procedural compliance with Commission policies and procedures. SAC reports are not subject to Commission approval, fact-checking or policy changes.

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Presenters include Commissioner William Wrenn of the New Hampshire Department of Corrections, Warden Joanne Fortier of the New Hampshire Prison for Women, Warden Richard Gerry of the New Hampshire Prison for Men, as well as other Correction Department personnel, government officials, and public advocates.

The briefing is open to the public. For more information contact Barbara de La Vieu, Eastern Regional Office, 202-376-7533, or Jordan Budd, Chairman, New Hampshire Advisory Committee, 603-228-1541.

The New Jersey Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has established state advisory committees to advise the Commission about civil rights issues in their states that are within the Commission's jurisdiction. More specifically, the committees are authorized to receive reports, suggestions, and recommendations from individuals, public officials, and representatives of public and private organizations in response to committee inquiries; forward advice and recommendations to the Commission; and assist the Commission in its public education and outreach efforts. The committees are comprised of state citizens who serve without compensation.

The New Jersey Advisory Committee is chaired by Leanna Y. Brown. Members of the Committee are: Richard F. Collier, Jr.; Jane R. Dunham; Sherine El-Abd; Lora L. Fong; Brian M. Gaffney; John J. Hart; Shavar D. Jeffries; Lawrence S. Lustberg; David R. Oakley; Clement A. Price; Saulo Santiago; Judd A. Serotta; Beth J. Sheehan; Morris G. Smith; William J. Stephney; Jackson Toby; Peter W. Wood.

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