

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 20, 2009

The Honorable Eric Holder  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder,

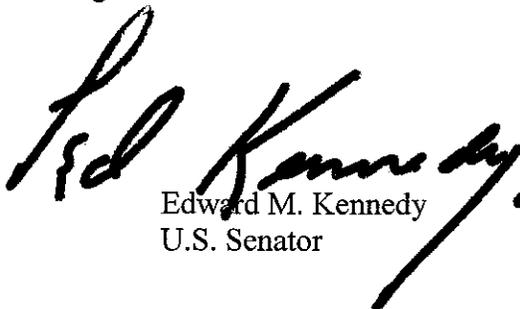
On June 23, the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission released its recommendations regarding the pervasive issue of sexual assault in prisons. The commission, created by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA), was charged with studying federal, state, and local government policies and practices regarding sexual violence behind bars. As the original cosponsors of PREA, we write to encourage you to move quickly to adopt the recommendations of the commission and to promulgate national standards for enhancing the detection, prevention and punishment of prison rape.

The commission has worked diligently over the last six years to develop standards designed to make the prevention of prison rape a top priority and establish a zero-tolerance standard for the incidence of sexual abuse in American prisons. As directed by the statute, the commission has proposed standards in each of the following subject areas: training, prisoner classification and assignment, investigation and resolution of complaints, preservation of evidence, medical and mental health care for victims, investigation of staff misconduct, and creating of an incident reporting system.

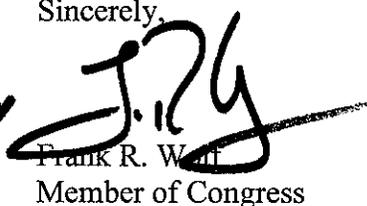
We want to recognize the commission for working in a broad and transparent manner to research and evaluate best practices, and drafting these standards with the help of leading experts, including corrections officials, survivors, advocates and scholars. The commission has done an outstanding job of examining the problem of prison sexual abuse and making articulate and thoughtful recommendations through its report and standards.

While the commission will sunset in August, we remain committed to the intent of PREA and seeing that the commission's recommendations are promptly adopted. We respectfully request a report on the progress of your consideration and formulation of regulations.

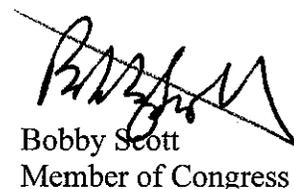
Sincerely,



Edward M. Kennedy  
U.S. Senator



Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress



Bobby Scott  
Member of Congress