



Liberals, Conservatives Unite to Implore U.S. Attorney General to Immediately Implement Prison Rape Standards

AUG. 17: Natl. Press Club PRESS CONF. Unveils Letter to Attorney General Signed by 35 Diverse Leaders; Prison Rape Survivor Shares Her Story

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- “Don’t even think of telling. It’s your word against mine, and you will lose. Do you think they’ll believe an inmate like you or a fine upstanding officer like me?”

[Marilyn Shirley](#) heard these words as she was brutally raped by a federal prison guard in Texas 10 years ago. The Bureau of Justice Statistics has found that prison rape is endured each year by:

- Some one in every eight juveniles in custody
- One in 20 adult inmates
- A total of 60,500 victims

On **Tuesday, Aug. 17**, Shirley will join a [bi-partisan coalition](#) of religious, political, human rights and civil rights groups, usually at odds, to unveil a **joint letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder. Signed by 35 organizations**, the letter urges Holder to adopt prison rape elimination standards mandated by 2003 legislation and completed 14 months ago. The attorney general missed the June 2010 deadline to adopt these standards designed to end sexual abuse in prisons, eradicate the long-term harm to survivors, their families and their communities, and ensure safety and justice for the incarcerated, among other goals.

OPEN TO MEDIA: The letter will be made public at a 10:00 a.m. ET press conference led by [Prison Fellowship](#) in the Lisagor Room at the National Press Club.

Standing in lockstep with Prison Fellowship, other coalition members calling for an immediate end to prison rape include:

- Just Detention International
- American Civil Liberties Union
- Focus on the Family
- NAACP
- Family Research Council
- The Sentencing Project
- National Association of Evangelicals

- Open Society Policy Center
- Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission
- Human Rights Watch
- United Methodist Board of Church and Society

“No matter how terrible the crime, no prison sentence includes being raped,” said Prison Fellowship Vice President [Pat Nolan](#), a former federal inmate who leads the organization’s Justice Fellowship criminal justice reform program. *“Victims of prison rape are wounded physically and psychologically. They carry those wounds home with them when they return to our communities. We call on Attorney General Holder to put an end to this stain on our nation’s character and quickly adopt standards to hold prison officials accountable for eliminating rape in America’s prisons.”*

Prison Fellowship’s Nolan helped develop the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), passed unanimously by Congress in 2003 and served on the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission (NPREC), tasked with developing standards to guide corrections officials in preventing prison rapes and hold them accountable for achieving results. The NPREC presented those standards to the Department of Justice (DOJ) in June 2009, and the DOJ was statutorily required to adopt them by June 2010. That deadline has passed and the DOJ expects to take another year to review them. The letter-signers caution that any further delay will mean that tens of thousands of additional men, women and youth will be raped in America’s prisons.

Tags: Prison Fellowship, Justice Fellowship, Pat Nolan, prison rape, End Prison Rape Now, Eric Holder, Marilyn Shirley, Lovisa Stannow

COVERAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- **ADVANCE Interview Opportunities:** Cover the long history of efforts to end prison rape and its impact on individuals and communities through interviews with:
 - Pat Nolan, Prison Fellowship vice president and former federal inmate
 - Marilyn Shirley, prison rape survivor
- **ON-SITE Interview Opportunities:** Speak with coalition members on the left and right including:
 - Pat Nolan, Prison Fellowship vice president and former federal inmate
 - Marilyn Shirley, prison rape survivor
 - Lovisa Stannow, Just Detention International executive director
 - David Keene, American Conservative Union
 - Margaret Winter, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
 - Barrett Duke, Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission
 - Hilary Shelton, NAACP
 - Tim Goeglein, Focus on the Family
 - Antonio Ginatta, Human Rights Watch
 - Bill Mefford, United Methodist Church Board of Church and Society

QUOTES

Pat Nolan, Prison Fellowship vice president and former federal prisoner

- ***“No matter how terrible the crime, no prison sentence includes being raped.”***
- *“Victims of prison rape are wounded physically and psychologically. They carry those wounds home with them when they return to our communities. We call on Attorney General Holder to put an end to this stain on our nation’s character and quickly adopt standards to hold prison officials accountable for eliminating rape in America’s prisons.”*

Marilyn Shirley, prison rape survivor

- *“Because of this rape, I haven’t been able to be intimate with my husband of 30 years. I also have paralyzing panic attacks. Sometimes I can’t even hold my grandbaby because I’m afraid of having a panic attack and dropping her. I also have awful nightmares and sometimes I wet the bed as a result. My husband has to pull me out of the closet where I go to feel safe. I’m on five different medications for these conditions. I sometimes fear my rapist is going to come after me even though he’s in prison for 12 and a half years. Every day I relive this rape. Rape should not have been a part of my punishment. Let’s work together to end this injustice.”*

ABOUT PRISON FELLOWSHIP

Prison Fellowship is the world’s largest outreach to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. Its Justice Fellowship program advocates for criminal justice reform through grassroots lobbying and working with federal and state government officials. For more information, view the full [press kit](#).

RELEVANT COVERAGE

- *Huffington Post* (Aug. 6, 2010)
by Guest Columnist Lovisa Stannow
Headline: [“After Three Decades, the Fight to End Prisoner Rape Continues”](#)
- *The Los Angeles Times* (April 5, 2010)
by Connie Rice and Pat Nolan
Headline: [“Policing Prisons”](#)
- *The New York Times* (May 31, 2010)
Headline: [“It’s Up to You, Mr. Holder”](#)
- *Omaha World-Herald* – Omaha, Neb. (Aug. 8, 2009)
by Catherine Tsai
Headline: [“Colo. Judge Sends Message with Prison Rape Penalty”](#)

OTHER NEWS RELEASES FROM PRISON FELLOWSHIP

- [New Dept. of Justice Report: Widespread Sexual Abuse of Juveniles in U.S. Prisons](#)
- [Dept. of Justice Report: Sexual Abuse by Staff in U.S. Prisons Has Doubled](#)
- [Prison Fellowship Hails Bipartisan Panel’s Guidelines to Prevent Prison Rape](#)
- [Prison Fellowship Honored for Commitment to Raise Awareness of Sexual Abuse in Prison](#)

BIO

Prison Fellowship Vice President

Pat Nolan is a vice president at Prison Fellowship, the world's largest outreach to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. He leads Justice Fellowship, the ministry's public policy program that advocates for criminal justice reform based on the principles of restorative justice found in the Bible. Collaborating with government officials, Justice Fellowship looks for practical ways to help victims of crime, transform the hearts and minds of offenders, and restore families and communities long plagued by crime. Justice Fellowship's efforts focus on ensuring that offenders are better prepared to live healthy, productive, lawabiding lives after their release. To read the full bio [click here](#).

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PRESS CONFERENCE DETAILS

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Tuesday, Aug. 17

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10:00 – 10:30 a.m.

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National Press Club - Lisagor Room

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529 14th St. NW (Pennsylvania and 14th Streets)

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Washington, D.C. 20045

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