

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 5, 2008

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CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION TO EXAMINE PRISONERS' RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

What: Meeting of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring and protecting civil rights

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has brought together a diverse group of experts to discuss issues arising out of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). These include the rights of prisoners to practice their religion freely, the rights of faith-based organizations to offer inmates services on equal terms with secular organizations, questions concerning the separation of church and state, and questions of national and prison security.

The speakers will include Abu Qadir Al-Amin, Imam, San Francisco Muslim Community Center; Carolyn Atkins, Warden, Maryland Correctional Institution-Jessup; Frank Cilluffo, Director, Homeland Security Policy Institute, The George Washington University; Lane Dilg, Staff Attorney, American Civil Liberties Union Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief; Gary Friedman, Chairman, Jewish Prisoner Services International; Alex Luchenitser, Senior Litigation Counsel, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State; Patrick McCollum, Statewide Wiccan Chaplain, California Department of Corrections; Steven T. McFarland, Director, Task Force For Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, Office of the Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice; Patrick Nolan, Vice President, Prison Fellowship; Joseph Pryor, Chaplaincy Administrator for the Federal Bureau of Prisons; and Gregory Saathoff, Executive Director, Critical Incident Analysis Group, University of Virginia.

When: Friday, February 8, 2008, 9:30 a.m.

Where: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 624 Ninth Street NW, Room 540, Washington, D.C.

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring federal civil rights enforcement. Members include Chairman Gerald A. Reynolds, Vice Chairman Abigail Thernstrom, and Commissioners Gail Heriot, Peter N. Kirsanow, Arlan D. Melendez, Ashley L. Taylor, Jr., and Michael Yaki. Robert Lerner, Assistant Staff Director for the Office of Civil Rights Evaluation, is delegated the authority of Staff Director. Commission meetings are open to the media and general public.