

Homeland Security Dept., on Immigrant Detention

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To the Editor:

"A Broken, Dangerous System" (editorial, Dec. 5) shortchanges the important steps the Department of **Homeland Security** has taken to reform our nation's immigration **detention** system, strengthening accountability while prioritizing the health and safety of people in **detention** facilities across the country.

Since 2009, Immigration and Customs Enforcement has increased oversight, including announced and unannounced inspections, the closing of some facilities and additional **detention** services managers to ensure facility compliance. Likewise, the department's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties has stepped up inspections, training and oversight.

The department strongly supports the Prison Rape Elimination Act, a federal law. In fact, current **detention** standards adhere to the law's substantive requirements, and new revised draft standards include even stronger provisions on sexual abuse. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has terminated contracts with facilities that fail to meet our standards.

The department remains committed to safe, secure, humane **detention** conditions -- and continues to make progress on that commitment.

MARGO SCHLANGER Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Department of **Homeland Security** Washington, Dec. 7, 2011

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