

## **Honoring That Promise of Detention Reform**

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### **Body**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The U.S. government must act to **reform** the corrupt mechanisms that feed the abuse of immigrants in **detention**.

#### **FULL TEXT**

Last month the Obama administration announced that it was going to overhaul immigration **detention**, to impose accountability and safety on a system notoriously deficient in both.

This month, the official chosen to lead the effort, Dora Schriro, announced that she was leaving Washington to become the commissioner of correction for New York City. But the job of fixing the **detention** system, and all of its horrors, must move ahead.

On Friday, her last day on the job, Ms. Schriro delivered a report on the **detention** system to Janet Napolitano, the homeland security secretary. We hope that it fully reflects the desperate reality: the brutal mistreatment; isolation, filth and deprivation; the shabby or nonexistent health care and the ill and injured detainees who languished and sometimes died, their suffering untreated.

Ms. Schriro's successor will have a big job in fulfilling the administration's **promise** of **reform**. The abuse and neglect must end.

The system must also become much more discriminating about whom it holds - dangerous criminals, not the harmless and sick.

It will also have to rein in the private for-profit prisons that deliver brutal service on the cheap. And it will have to increase accountability and transparency. Ms. Napolitano can start by releasing Ms. Schriro's report.

Americans need to find out what happened in Basile, Louisiana, where detainees staged a hunger strike to protest detestable conditions, or downtown Los Angeles, where inmates filed a lawsuit to protest the squalor.

While Ms. Napolitano and her team **promise** to make **detention** a "truly civil" system, they show no interest in **reforming** the corrupt mechanisms that feed it.

Instead, they are expanding the programs that have allowed corrupt local officials to round up thousands in unjust raids. The same people whom President Obama has **promised** a decent shot at citizenship remain easy prey to racial profiling, and are terrified of ending up in this truly uncivilized system.

Mr. Obama and Ms. Napolitano must resolve that fundamental contradiction.

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