

**§ 15543. Transferred**

## CODIFICATION

Section 15543 was editorially reclassified as section 21143 of Title 52, Voting and Elections.

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**CHAPTER 147—PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION**

## Sec.

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**§ 15601. Findings**

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) 2,100,146 persons were incarcerated in the United States at the end of 2001: 1,324,465 in Federal and State prisons and 631,240 in county and local jails. In 1999, there were more than 10,000,000 separate admissions to and discharges from prisons and jails.

(2) Insufficient research has been conducted and insufficient data reported on the extent of prison rape. However, experts have conservatively estimated that at least 13 percent of the inmates in the United States have been sexually assaulted in prison. Many inmates have suffered repeated assaults. Under this estimate, nearly 200,000 inmates now incarcerated have been or will be the victims of prison rape. The total number of inmates who have been sexually assaulted in the past 20 years likely exceeds 1,000,000.

(3) Inmates with mental illness are at increased risk of sexual victimization. America's jails and prisons house more mentally ill individuals than all of the Nation's psychiatric hospitals combined. As many as 16 percent of inmates in State prisons and jails, and 7 percent of Federal inmates, suffer from mental illness.

(4) Young first-time offenders are at increased risk of sexual victimization. Juveniles are 5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted in adult rather than juvenile facilities—often within the first 48 hours of incarceration.

(5) Most prison staff are not adequately trained or prepared to prevent, report, or treat inmate sexual assaults.

(6) Prison rape often goes unreported, and inmate victims often receive inadequate treat-

ment for the severe physical and psychological effects of sexual assault—if they receive treatment at all.

(7) HIV and AIDS are major public health problems within America's correctional facilities. In 2000, 25,088 inmates in Federal and State prisons were known to be infected with HIV/AIDS. In 2000, HIV/AIDS accounted for more than 6 percent of all deaths in Federal and State prisons. Infection rates for other sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, and hepatitis B and C are also far greater for prisoners than for the American population as a whole. Prison rape undermines the public health by contributing to the spread of these diseases, and often giving a potential death sentence to its victims.

(8) Prison rape endangers the public safety by making brutalized inmates more likely to commit crimes when they are released—as 600,000 inmates are each year.

(9) The frequently interracial character of prison sexual assaults significantly exacerbates interracial tensions, both within prison and, upon release of perpetrators and victims from prison, in the community at large.

(10) Prison rape increases the level of homicides and other violence against inmates and staff, and the risk of insurrections and riots.

(11) Victims of prison rape suffer severe physical and psychological effects that hinder their ability to integrate into the community and maintain stable employment upon their release from prison. They are thus more likely to become homeless and/or require government assistance.

(12) Members of the public and government officials are largely unaware of the epidemic character of prison rape and the day-to-day horror experienced by victimized inmates.

(13) The high incidence of sexual assault within prisons involves actual and potential violations of the United States Constitution. In *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825 (1994), the Supreme Court ruled that deliberate indifference to the substantial risk of sexual assault violates prisoners' rights under the Cruel and Unusual Punishments Clause of the Eighth Amendment. The Eighth Amendment rights of State and local prisoners are protected through the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Pursuant to the power of Congress under Section Five of the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress may take action to enforce those rights in States where officials have demonstrated such indifference. States that do not take basic steps to abate prison rape by adopting standards that do not generate significant additional expenditures demonstrate such indifference. Therefore, such States are not entitled to the same level of Federal benefits as other States.

(14) The high incidence of prison rape undermines the effectiveness and efficiency of United States Government expenditures through grant programs such as those dealing with health care; mental health care; disease prevention; crime prevention, investigation, and prosecution; prison construction, maintenance, and operation; race relations; poverty; unemployment and homelessness. The effec-