



Ethical Action Report



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End Torture: Call for an Independent Bipartisan Commission on Harsh Interrogation Techniques

Write to your members of Congress and demand that they create an Independent Bipartisan Commission on Interrogation. Torture under any name is wrong. It's time to correct America's damaged human rights record and to begin to heal our image abroad. Sign the petition today at <http://endtorture.net>

BACKGROUND

Three years ago the world was shocked to learn that the United States was using "harsh interrogation techniques" against detainees—a fancy term for what you and I would call torture.

The techniques used by the CIA during interrogation include waterboarding—where the detainee is led to believe he or she is drowning—and which has been used by some of history’s most reviled entities, including the Spanish Inquisition, the Gestapo, and the Khmer Rouge. Sleep deprivation and stress positions are among other abusive methods used.

This is not what America stands for. We need our elected officials to look into these so-called harsh techniques immediately and end all barbaric practices so as to restore our standing in the world.

Free Speech: Stop an FCC Ban on Profanity

Take a stand against censorship! Write to your senators and urge them to vote no on S. 1780, a bill that would let the Federal Communications Commission ban profanity and “fleeting expletives” between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. This bill will be coming up on the Senate floor in a matter of weeks, so the time to act is now!

BACKGROUND

Congress and the FCC are attempting to curtail free speech on the public airwaves with a Senate bill that would allow the FCC to ban so-called fleeting expletives—exclamatory curse words—on broadcast television from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The government claims that fleeting expletives are causing harm to the nation, despite having no evidence that this is the case. What *does* cause the nation harm is governmental censorship of speech. Similar FCC censorship has been found unconstitutional by federal courts. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit recently rejected FCC policy, finding it arbitrary and without foundation.

Moreover, the FCC has never defined what is or isn’t profane, rather effectively saying they know it when they hear it. This means such programs as Allen Ginsberg’s “Howl” and Ken Burns’ documentary “The War” could easily be targeted as profane.

The FCC needs to stop playing parent and stay out of our living rooms.

Hurricane Katrina: Investigate Abuses Two Years After

Urge your members of Congress to call for an investigation into the civil rights violations that occurred in New Orleans jails during Hurricane Katrina two years ago. Also demand the development of evacuation plans and adequate medical and mental health services in jails.

BACKGROUND

A massive civil rights outrage occurred during Hurricane Katrina, yet to date there has been no comprehensive investigation into the abuses that occurred during and after the storm.

Two years ago prisoners in New Orleans jails were abandoned. Many were forced to spend days in water that crept up to their shoulders. And this kind of abuse is not confined to what happened during Katrina. Often mentally ill prisoners are left in restraints for days without supervision, and endure other inhumane conditions.

The Department of Justice must investigate civil rights abuses that occurred in New Orleans jails. In addition, an adequate evacuation plan must be developed, and concerns with medical and mental health care must be addressed. Let's make sure what happened during Katrina never happens again.

Stand up for Choice: Don't Approve Honaker's Nomination!

Write to your senators and tell them to refuse to consider the nomination of anti-choice crusader Richard Honaker to the U.S. District Court of Wyoming. Honaker is far too extreme for a life-long appointment. Instead, a moderate individual who is more in line with American mainstream views should fill the post.

BACKGROUND

President George W. Bush has nominated Richard Honaker for a lifetime job as a federal judge, continuing his assault on a woman's right to choose. Honaker has consistently denied women access to safe, legal reproductive-health services. He has called abortion equivalent to murder, and has tried to ban abortion in Wyoming three times (unsuccessfully). In addition, he also teamed up with an extreme anti-choice group to push for a ballot measure to ban abortion, which was overwhelmingly rejected by Wyoming voters.

Bush has proven he is out of touch with the views of mainstream America with his court nominations. Tell your senators to take a stand against anti-choice nominations today!

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