

Statement
By
Congressman Robert C. “Bobby” Scott
Chairman
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security
Hearing on
H.R. 1889, the “Private Prison Information Act of 2007” and H.R.
4109, the “Prison Abuse Remedies Act of 2007” and
An issue hearing on reforming the Prison Litigation Reform Act
November 8, 2007

(Gavel the hearing open) The committee will now come to order.

I am pleased to welcome you today to this hearing before the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security on H.R.1889, the “Private Prison Information Act of 2007” and H.R. 4109, the “Prison Abuse Remedies Act of 2007.” Witnesses may also testify generally on the issue of reforming the Prison Litigation Reform Act.

We will first take up H.R. 1889. This is a simple piece of legislation that would do one thing – it would require prisons and other correctional facilities holding Federal prisoners under a contract with the Federal Government to comply with 5 U.S.C. 552, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

There have been incidents when members of the press and public

have attempted, unsuccessfully, to obtain information from private prisons, even in situations as serious as prison escapes or incidents of assaults in prison. There is simply no reason why these institutions, which are serving a governmental function, should not be subject to FOIA. This is a good government bill, which I hope my colleagues will support.

