

Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/ice-should-not-use-private-prison-youngstown-hold-immigrants-says-aclu-ohio>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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CLEVELANDThe Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is pursuing a contract with the private prison company Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) to hold people in the Northeast Ohio Correctional Center in Youngstown prior to deporting them.

Incarcerating thousands of immigrants in a private prison before deporting them is unjust and allowing a corporation to profit from it is a travesty, said Mike Brickner, Senior Policy Director of the ACLU of Ohio. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is seeking 5,000 new beds to house the unprecedented numbers of immigrants who are in its custody. The DHSs decision to partner with private prisons sends a horrible message about profiteering at the expense of individuals seeking asylum, said Brickner.

DHSs decision to negotiate deals with private prisons is especially troubling as just two months ago the Department of Justice announced the end of its use of private prisons after finding evidence of widespread abuse. Following suit, DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson asked the Homeland Security Advisory Council to review its current policy on the use of private immigration detention centers and evaluate whether to eliminate the practice. Prior to DOJ's announcement this year, the federal Bureau of Prisons had cancelled its contract with CCA in Youngstown in December 2014.

During ICE detention, these people have been subject to abuse and mistreatment, said Brickner. Incentivizing private companies to detain people for profit only exacerbates our criminal justice system problems. To allow more people to be incarcerated for a profit in Ohio sends our state in the wrong direction. We urge local legislators to immediately call for an end to the contract discussions between ICE and CCA and prevent the Youngstown prison from becoming an ICE detention center.

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