

Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/federal-government-should-stop-housing-immigrants-youngstown-prison-facility-generate>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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YOUNGSTOWN The ACLU of Ohio is urging the U.S. Bureau of Prisons to end its contract to house immigrant prisoners with the private, for-profit prison company Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) at the Northeast Ohio Correctional Center (NEOCC) in Youngstown, Ohio. NEOCC's contract to house immigrants expires in 2015. The call to drop the contract comes after the release of a new ACLU national report [*Warehoused and Forgotten: Immigrants Trapped in Our Shadow Private Prison System*](#), investigating the tragedies at Criminal Alien Requirement (CAR) prisons in Texas and across the country.

The report uncovers a number of abuses at CCAs CAR prisons in Texas including:

The ACLU's new report is another vivid reminder of what happens when we entrust our prison system to corporations whose only motivation is profit, said ACLU of Ohio Director of Communications and Public Policy Mike Brickner. We have a responsibility to those we have put in detention to treat them fairly and humanely, but that is far from the reality at for-profit CAR prisons run by CCA and other private companies.

Unfortunately, this is nothing new for Ohioans, added Brickner. For-profit prisons have been a failed experiment here for decades. Violence increases, drug use is common, and medical care is neglected, leading to facilities deteriorating rapidly. Despite all these problems, we continue to give taxpayer money to these for-profit companies that are subject to little oversight.

CCA first operated a for-profit prison in Ohio when it opened NEOCC in 1997. In its first 14 months of operation, the facility experienced 13 stabbings, two murders, and six escapes. The city of Youngstown eventually filed a lawsuit against CCA on behalf of the prisoners. Even after those tragedies, CCA still operates the prison today. CCA also purchased the Lake Erie Correctional Institute in Conneaut, Ohio in 2011. In its first 18 months of operation, the facility saw an 187.5% increase in prisoner-on-prisoner violence, a 300% increase in prisoner-on-staff violence, rising levels of drug contraband leading to two heroin overdoses, and state inspections that found prisoners without access to running water and defecating in plastic bags.

It is far past time for Ohio to get out of the for-profit prison business. We should not allow our immigration or our criminal justice system to generate a profit for any corporation. It is bad for prisoners, prison employees, communities, and taxpayers, concluded Brickner.