

## Anabella Mayorga

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**From:** Honora Spicer <honora@mailfence.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2025 10:16 AM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of House Bill HB-5724

Dear House Committee on State Government & Elections,

I am Honora Spicer, and I am a volunteer with AMOR. I support House Bill HB-5724.

In the first two weeks of March, AMOR received messages from 16 people detained by ICE who specified that they would not have enough to eat without help purchasing food from the Commissary.

At the Wyatt Detention Facility, a property belonging to the public body, people detained are forced into hunger for profit. These are the words of someone detained by ICE in Rhode Island in March 2025: "The food they cook is not enough in size...I'm still hungry after I already ate."

To have sufficient calories, the only option available to people detained is to purchase food at inflated prices through the prison commissary. The same person detained continued, "not having money to buy snacks or order commissary makes life even harder in this place."

People detained must choose between buying food to have sufficient calories and using those same funds to make exorbitantly priced calls and messages that are necessary to both survive detention and to advance their immigration case.

AMOR has received reports that the facility is often only serving food with pork and that people who are Muslim or don't eat pork have no other options and go hungry.

To receive funds to make exorbitant payments for both food and communication, the company TouchPay takes a cut of more than 10% of funds transferred to people detained from their family and friends.

This bill addresses contracts for detention for civil immigration violations, and a long history exists establishing the legal status of immigration detention as civil and not punitive. But Rhode Island is currently using property belonging to the public body to imprison people, design a situation of forced hunger, and freely allow contractors to profit off that hunger. This is punitive incarceration.

What is happening in Rhode Island is not an inherent component of an immigration process, but the abuse of public resources through the design of hunger and suffering for private gain. This is not a system that can be reformed, it must be eliminated.

I urge you to vote in favor of House Bill H-5724

Sincerely,  
Honora Spicer