

Dear Chairperson and members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of House Bill 5724, which will prohibit state and municipal contractors from agreeing to detain individuals for civil immigration violations and end all such contracts that exist by July 1, 2026. The bill also prohibits the use of public resources to detain individuals for civil immigration violations.

As a Rhode Island native and legal practitioner in the state, I cannot accept the dehumanizing detention and treatment our community members suffer in ICE custody. I cannot accept that our state allows Wyatt Detention Center to isolate, neglect, and mistreat our community members through the twisted justification of economic development or public safety, when ICE terrorizes communities of color and continues to escalate their tactics under the Trump Administration. Our state has a rich history of immigration, waves of which have left impressions on Federal Hill, Broad Street, and more. To continue to allow a single prison to abuse, isolate and mistreat our community members would be a slap in the face to the contributions immigrants over the years have made to our state and an affront to the values of those living here who oppose anti-immigrant and xenophobic beliefs and practices.

Rhode Island, a place made great by immigrants, must be a safe place for them. We cannot allow state and municipal contractors to benefit from the targeting and abuse of immigrants. For these reasons, I ask the Committee please pass House Bill 5724.

Sincerely,

Yulyana Torres
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