

Roberta DiMezza

From: Zach Edson <zachary.j.edson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2025 11:50 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: Written testimony for HB-5724

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Dear Roberta DiMezza,

My name is Zach Edson, and I'm writing in strong support of HB-5724 to end Intergovernmental Service Agreements for immigration detention in Rhode Island.

This bill is an essential step toward ending our state's involvement in the cruel and exploitative system of immigration detention.

Right now, the Wyatt Detention Center holds immigrants under contract with ICE. This facility has a long record of abuse—medical neglect, unsanitary conditions, retaliation against those who speak out, and denial of basic communication with loved ones.

In 2020, during the pandemic, 60 people detained at Wyatt went on hunger strike to demand humane treatment. They were punished with isolation and cut off from the outside world. That is not justice. That is inhumanity.

We must also acknowledge that detention centers like Wyatt are a financial burden. Central Falls should not have to rely on incarceration to stay afloat. No city should.

This legislation sends a powerful message: Rhode Island will not profit off pain. We will not support a system that tears families apart and criminalizes people for seeking safety and belonging.

Immigrants deserve to fight their cases in freedom and in community—not behind bars.

I urge you to pass this bill and bring Rhode Island in line with our values of dignity, fairness, and justice.

Thank you.

Zach Edson, Halsey St, Providence, RI