

Good Afternoon Representatives. My name is Emilio Leroux-Parra. I stand before you to testify in favor of HB7436. A bill that prohibits Rhode Island renewing and entering into new agreements with U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

ICE remains in the Wyatt detention center today because of a lawsuit that the investors brought against the City of Central Falls seven years ago. In 2019, the Wyatt Board reopened the ICE contract, 11 years after the first contract closed due to gross medical neglect that led to the death of an immigrant detainee, Hiu Lui "Jason" Ng.

After widespread demands to remove ICE from the Wyatt Detention Center, the City elected to initiate the process of ending the contract. Bondholders responded by suing the City of Central Falls as well as the chair for the detention centers board of directors Joseph Molina Flynn

UMB bank claimed that removal of ICE detainees from the facility would have a negative effect on the Wyatt and demanded \$130 million. In addition, UMB Bank placed a temporary restraining order against the Wyatt's city-appointed board, barring them from managing the facility and preventing them from raising their voices in protest, silencing them.

Leaving the Wyatt accountable only to its bondholder, whose sole interest is maintaining the Wyatt open and filling beds for its profit, rather than the health and safety of its inhabitants.

I believe everyone can agree no matter your stance, that the government is and should be in the words of Abraham Lincoln "of the people, by the people." Silencing the government elected officials, where the government is voted on by the people is akin to silencing the people. I do not believe Rhode Island is a state that should be working with any agency or investors that operate in such a way.

As a Mexican-American, the son of an immigrant and a life long food industry worker, I implore you to please take the time to consider HB7436 to end ICE's contract in the Wyatt detention center and to stop any more like it from existing.