

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** Allison Trionfetti <allisontrionfetti@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 9, 2024 3:00 PM  
**To:** House State Government and Elections Committee  
**Subject:** ATTN: Steven Sepe, Written Testimony RE: House Bill No. 7968

### Written Testimony In Support of House Bill No. 7968

Name: Allison Trionfetti  
Bill No. 7968  
Viewpoint: For

I am submitting this written testimony to express my support for House Bill No. 7968, a bill which would prohibit Rhode Island from contracts to detain individuals for civil immigration violations and prohibit using public resources to detain said individuals. I am in support of this bill because I am outraged and heartbroken by the dehumanization experienced by people detained at the Wyatt Detention Center and other prisons like it.

The Wyatt Detention Center detains immigrants through its Intergovernmental Service Agreement (IGSA) with ICE. By prohibiting IGSA contracts, we would effectively eliminate immigration detention in the state of RI. Across the country, states have passed legislation banning private prisons and detention centers. It is past time that Rhode Island join them in saying an emphatic NO to detention centers run by corporations and private investors. There is ample evidence that shows such privately run detention centers prioritize profits and filled beds over the rights and human dignity of the people they keep detained. These centers are factories of neglect and abuse and we know that the Wyatt is guilty of such inhumane treatment of its detainees.

Nearly four years ago, to the day, on April 4th, 2020, 60 people detained by ICE at the Wyatt launched a hunger strike to demand safer conditions and their release amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The Wyatt staff responded with harsh retaliation against the hunger strikers, cutting off their phone access and placing strikers in isolation. This is just one prominent instance in the Wyatt's long history of neglect. With the passage of this legislation Rhode Island can build a community free of exploitative and inhumane immigration detention practices. I support this bill because I believe in people over profits and human dignity and community over abuse and isolation. This bill is a step in the right direction to shutting down the Wyatt. It's high time we invest in care and not cages. Thank you for considering my testimony.