

Dear House Committee on State Government & Elections,

I'm writing in favor of House Bill No. 7968, Ban ICE Contracts with Prisons & Private Detention in Rhode Island

So many of those migrating today are seeking refuge from violence, domestic or in their communities but, we detain them. What is the origin of the violence in the communities from which these immigrants hope to escape? As Amy Goodman explained on the March 30, 2021 episode of the "Democracy Now!" news program, these countries have been destabilized from "decades of the U.S.- backed military repression in places like Guatemala, where over 150,000 mainly Indigenous people were killed; in El Salvador... tens of thousands of Salvadorans killed, (by the) U.S.- backed military death squads and government; and in Honduras, the staging ground for the U.S. for the war against the Contras in Nicaragua."

Migrants face a very dangerous route to the United States. An example is given on the March 15, 2021 episode of "Democracy Now!" when they covered that in January migrants were "massacred while crossing Mexico as they attempted to reach the U.S.... 19 bodies were found shot and charred inside a pickup truck in the northern state of Tamaulipas, near the U.S.-Mexico border. A dozen Mexican police officers were arrested in connection to the killings." Rodolfo Jimenez, "the father of one of the victims" said "It hurts to lose a child. He went to look for a better life. He wanted to build his house, help his family, his siblings. That was his goal. But, unfortunately, he was killed in the Tamaulipas massacre."

ICE detention represents systemic fascism and is a continuation of decades long trauma by the U.S. against people from Central America.

In 2008 Hiu Lui "Jason" Ng died from medical neglect at the Wyatt. Medical neglect has continued to be abundant during the Covid pandemic and detainees were retaliated against for speaking out.

In 2019 a guard drove his truck into protesters.

The Wyatt does nothing positive for the community of Central Falls. And what is it like being a guard for the Wyatt? As a former Correctional Officer employee reviewed them on [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) on February 3, 2019, "If you are a good person, stay clear."

In Rhode Island, like all other state's of conscience, we must Abolish our prison contracts with ICE!

I support House Bill No. 7968

Matthew Alfred Souza, Cranston