

*Via email delivery only*

To: Members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives

September 23, 2025

**Re: Communities Not Cages: Confronting Trump's Dangerous Detention Expansion**

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned 134 organizations, write to reaffirm our commitment to the Communities Not Cages campaign and its call to shut down Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers and halt the expansion and construction of new facilities across the country.

The Trump administration is aggressively pursuing an unjustifiable and inhumane plan to expand immigration detention [to detain 100,000 people](#) at any given time. Over the summer, Congress passed an unconscionable and obscene funding package, handing the Trump administration and ICE over \$150 billion for mass detention and deportation, including a staggering \$45 billion dedicated to expanding immigration detention, while slashing essential services and benefits that millions of Americans depend on. With this unprecedented new funding, ICE is the largest federal law enforcement agency, and the ICE detention system will be bigger than the federal prison system.

This expansion is already in motion: ICE has increased its partnerships with local sheriffs, county jails, state prisons, deepened collaboration with the Bureau of Prisons, and sprawled into the Department of Defense by using military bases like Fort Bliss for detention and deportation hubs. The administration has expanded surveillance, reintroduced family detention, and initiated offshore detention arrangements through unprecedented carceral partnerships with foreign governments. The most shocking of these actions has been the expansion of ICE detention at Guantánamo Bay, the agreement with the government of El Salvador to incarcerate people indefinitely at the notorious CECOT prison, and most recently partnerships with state governors to construct and open new immigration detention prisons and camps, such as the Florida Everglades camp and the Miami Correctional Facility in Indiana, but more insidious expansion has also been underway.

In August 2025, ICE was detaining more than 61,000 people—a 55 percent surge since January. This marks the highest ICE detention population in U.S. history. These numbers are not just statistics; they represent lives caught in a web of violence, isolation, and fear. The spike in detentions has been driven by workplace raids, chaotic street enforcement, and neighborhood sweeps that encourage racial profiling and disrupt entire communities. The result has been a widespread fear, the disappearance of loved ones, and the erosion of trust in public institutions.

This mass incarceration agenda has overwhelmed an already abusive detention system. Since January 2025, the [ten largest immigration detention facilities have reported nearly 400 emergency medical calls](#) for cardiac episodes, seizures, and head injuries. As of the beginning of September, there have been 15 reported deaths in ICE custody. These numbers reflect a dangerous environment that continues to be documented by detained people and their loved ones, legal service providers, Congressional delegations, and immigrant rights advocates, who have for decades reported horrific conditions including lack of food and necessities, extreme medical neglect, psychological trauma, and a complete lack of oversight.

Detention Watch Network launched the Communities Not Cages campaign in 2018 to amplify the work of local organizers exposing the harms of ICE detention and demanding shutdowns. We relaunched in 2021 as the [First Ten campaign](#)—a strategic push to close ten notorious ICE detention centers during a period when the detained population was at a 20-year low. Today, we are relaunching Communities Not Cages in a dramatically different landscape. Trump's new wave of detention sites represents a renewed and brutal expansion of ICE's reach, often in collaboration with private prison corporations, federal, state and local law enforcement, the military, and foreign governments. These facilities are not only symbols of cruelty—they are actively harming immigrant communities at an unprecedented scale and are a moral injury to our identity as a nation.

This moment demands bold and principled action. The Trump administration is using fear and disinformation to justify mass incarceration. We cannot let history repeat itself on a larger, deadlier scale.

**Join us in demanding the halt of all ICE detention expansion, the closure of facilities spotlighted in the Communities Not Cages campaign, and no more funding for ICE detention in the ongoing appropriations process.**

The time to act is now. Join the Communities Not Cages campaign in building a future rooted in dignity, safety, and justice for all.

Thank you,

Detention Watch Network  
18 Million Rising  
A New PATH  
Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice  
Afghans For A Better Tomorrow  
Alianza Americas  
American Friends Service Committee  
Amnesty International USA  
Anar  
Anti Police-Terror Project  
Arriba Las Vegas Worker Center

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Prisoner Support Committee  
Ayuda  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action  
California Coalition For Women Prisoners  
California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (CCIJ)  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice  
CASA  
Casa de Paz  
Center for Constitutional Rights  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies (CGRS)  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC)  
Communities United for Status & Protection (CUSP)  
Community Justice Project  
Community Organizer  
Dream Action Oklahoma  
El Refugio  
Envision Freedom Fund  
Estrella del Paso  
Families for Freedom  
First Friends of NJ & NY  
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project  
Florida Immigrant Coalition  
Florida Student Power  
Food Justice DMV  
Freedom for Immigrants  
Freedom to Thrive  
Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice  
Haitian Bridge Alliance  
Harbor Institute for Immigrant & Economic Justice  
Hope Knows No Borders Network  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Immaculate Heart Community  
Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef)  
Immigrant Justice Network  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Immigration Law & Justice Network  
Indiana AID  
Indy Next Gen

Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity  
International Detention Coalition (IDC)  
International Tribunal of Conscience of Peoples in Movement  
Jane's Due Process  
Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice of Western Mass  
Jewish Community Action  
Jewish Voice for Peace - Bay Area  
Just Detention International  
Justice Teams Network  
Kehilla Community Synagogue Immigration Committee  
La Defensa  
La Union Del Pueblo Entero  
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)  
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children  
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention  
Make the Road Connecticut  
Make the Road Nevada  
Make the Road New Jersey  
Make the Road New York  
Make the Road Pennsylvania  
Make the Road States  
Malaya Georgia  
Miami Valley Immigration Coalition  
MICA Project  
Michigan Solidarity Bail Fund  
Midwest Immigration Bond Fund  
Migrant Equity Southeast  
MN8  
MPower Change Action Fund  
Muslim Advocates  
Muslims for Just Futures  
NAKASEC  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Immigration Project  
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
National Network of Abortion Funds  
National Partnership for New Americans  
National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies  
Never Again Action  
New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice  
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest  
No Detention Centers in Michigan  
NorCal Resist

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project  
Oxfam America  
Pennsylvania Immigration Coalition  
PIC  
Pomona Economic Opportunity Center  
Presente.org  
Pro-Choice Arizona / Abortion Fund of Arizona  
Public Counsel  
Quixote Center  
Race Forward  
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network  
RSN, Refugee Support Network & ODIS, Opening Doors International Services  
Sanctuary Campus Network  
Sanctuary of the South (SOS)  
Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network (SIREN)  
Showing Up for Racial Justice NYC  
Shut Down GEO Aurora  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team  
Sojourners/Sojo Action  
South Brooklyn Sanctuary  
Southeast Immigrant Rights Network  
The Place4Grace  
The Sanctuary Working Group  
The UndocuBlack Network  
The Workers Circle  
Transformations CDC  
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice  
United We Dream Network  
Uri L'Tzedek  
Utopian Visions  
Washington Defender Association  
We Are All America  
Witness at the Border  
Workers Defense Action Fund