



PRESS RELEASE

10/12/2018

Wyo Still Says No!

One year ago today the Department of Homeland Security issued a Request for Information regarding four potential locations for new immigration prisons, one in the Salt Lake City area. #WyoSayNo still feels strongly that MTC's track record in other states is horrendous and they should not be allowed to expand here. It has been a year and there is still no request for proposal. #WyoSayNo is still waiting, still watching and ready for any move that will be made.

"Today marks one year of the ongoing battle our communities keep fighting across Wyoming alongside our undocumented brothers and sisters," said Ana Castro, Vice Chair of Juntos. "As a Mexican woman I have always been taught to keep my head down, accept the terms that are giving to us, no questions asked. Not anymore. We will no longer conform to the idea that MTC's private prison will keep our families closer, as it will not. MTC and its broken promises are not welcome here. Juntos and the #WyoSayNo campaign will keep fighting alongside Wyoming communities to keep Wyoming free of private immigration prisons. Mi gente, aqui estamos y no nos vamos!"

On Good Friday, faith leaders and organizers came together to hold a prayer vigil outside the ICE office in Cheyenne. After a march was led by Wyoming DACA recipients who carried crosses on their shoulders all the way to the Governor's office.

Sandra Loza, Wyoming DACA recipient and activist, said, "As a DACA recipient and faith follower I strongly believe that as people of faith we know that our blessings carry responsibilities. That in our voices we can seek to express prophetic witness by influencing moral values and public policy. As we walked that day I couldn't help remembering Jesus and his journey to Calvary. During his walk to the site of His execution, Jesus fell three times and Simon of Cyrene was selected to help Jesus carry his cross. Simon's presence in this journey was brief but meaningful. Carrying a cross is a difficult thing, and as immigrants many of us carry the cross of being undocumented, being detained, or being separated from our families. That day and every day, I am reminded and grateful for all the Simons who take it upon themselves to help the suffering, that help me, and others carry our crosses. It has been one year of uncertainty and struggle, as we continue our work to keep families together."

Through the summer #WyoSayNo held Fiestas de Familias in Casper, Powell, Cody, Gillette, Riverton, Laramie, Cheyenne, Jackson and, Evanston. The final event in Evanston was the largest event with close to 100 people attending.

"Uinta County is a small peaceful community. Everyone knows one another and this detention center has become such a negative cloud that has affected so many of us," said Lubia Olivas, with Uinta County Say No. "We have hardworking people that live here and just because they don't have legal documentation does not mean they don't deserve to be here. I have grown up with many of them and they deserve to live in peace. This prison brings fear and I'm sure many people from our community will be forced out. It makes me sad that our county commissioners and Mayor think this is the only way to bring jobs to our community. On August 19th there was a BBQ to bring together our Latinos and have them voice their opinion, they have not been able to do this since they are afraid of being deported. We don't steal jobs nor do we take government hand outs. My husband and I have always worked hard to give our daughters the best. We will continue the fight against this prison. I just hope people understand how this will affect everyone, not just us in Evanston, but everyone one in Wyoming."

"Over the course of the past year we have been organizing events, actions, and gatherings all over the state," said Antonio Serrano, #WyoSayNo Lead organizer. "We are building our coalition by getting business owners and faith leaders to sign on. They understand a new facility will hurt our businesses and our humanity. With help from great people all over Wyoming we have been able to hold events to inform our community how an immigration prison will hurt families. We met with elected leaders to inform them of the truth about private prisons and their negative impact, something MTC seems to have a hard time doing. We're working hard and we will continue to work to protect our communities and to push MTC out. Recuerda a mi gente, no estás solo!"