

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA  
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September 22, 2015

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General John Roth  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

General Roth:

I write to express deep concern with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations' (ERO) decision to award GEO Care, LLC the grant to establish a new Family Case Management Program (FCMP). Given the numerous, well-documented concerns GEO Care and other private prison companies have elicited, I request that the Office of Inspector General investigate this decision.

I am pleased that the Department of Homeland Security will pilot an Alternative to Detention (ATD) initiative that uses case managers, but I am dismayed that this contract was awarded to one of the same for-profit prison companies that has been detaining women and children in horrific conditions for financial gain.

In June of this year, several of my colleagues and I traveled to Texas to visit both Karnes and Dilley detention facilities, where hundreds of immigrant women and children are imprisoned for fleeing violence in their home countries. Private prison companies manage these jail-like facilities for a profit, and numerous entities – both inside the government and out – have publicly raised concerns about this practice and the conditions within these facilities.

Last month, 178 House Democrats sent a letter to Secretary Jeh Johnson expressing concerns about the unacceptable conditions detainees face. Twice this summer, U.S. District Judge Dolly M. Gee ruled that the detention of immigrant women and children violates the terms of the Flores Settlement. And just last week, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) recommended that DHS release families from detention, and that Congress no longer fund family detention and reduce allocations for immigrant detention.

The USCCR's recommendations followed findings that "several DHS immigration detention facilities were not complying with federal mandates and agency policies regarding the treatment of detained immigrants and detained unaccompanied immigrant children. Moreover, the Commission found evidence, both anecdotal and eyewitness that the U.S. Government was interfering with the constitutional rights afforded to detained immigrants." Given the numerous allegations of mistreatment in facilities run by private prison companies, it is inconceivable that

the same entities will continue profiting off women and children seeking refuge in the United States.

I ask that you investigate ICE's decision to award GEO Care, LLC as the provider of their pilot ATD initiative. Given that GEO Group does not have case management experience, why was GEO Care, LLC selected over other applicants with prior experience? How did DHS make determinations of the accuracy of cost estimates? While private companies promised to be a more cost effective solution for incarceration, a recent study revealed that inmates serving in private prisons serve longer sentences on average for the same crimes, costing taxpayers more. Therefore, I ask that you review the adequacy of the contract solicitation process for this new program.

I appreciate your assistance with this matter and look forward to making sure our country is taking appropriate actions to ensure the humane treatment of refugees in our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

CC:

Jeh Johnson, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Cecilia Muñoz, Director, White House Domestic Policy Council