



SACRAMENTO CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL AFL - CIO

Embracing Amador, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Yolo and Sacramento Counties

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RESOLUTION CALLING ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS TO DIVEST FROM PRIVATE PRISONS AND URGING THE US SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE DENY FUNDING FOR THE OPERATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF PRIVATE IMMIGRANT PRISONS

WHEREAS, the Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL CIO has a history of opposing racially unjust abuse of workers including immigrants and people of color; and

WHEREAS, there exist no portfolio screens shielding the public institutions' investments from placement in the private prison industry; and

WHEREAS, the private prison industry is opposed to workers' exercise of the universally recognized right to organize and belong to unions of their choice; and

WHEREAS, the private prison industry and its financial institutional investors have successfully lobbied for immigration enforcement policies that resulted in the detention of over 2 million immigrants in the past 5 years; and

WHEREAS, the private prison industry's lobbyists successfully influenced Congress to kill comprehensive immigration reform in 2013; and

WHEREAS, the private prison industry continues to expand its lobbying efforts and campaign contributions, contributing approximately \$45 million in the last decade to state and federal governments;[1] and

WHEREAS, the private prison industry is entirely dependent on government contracts to incarcerate increasing numbers of immigrants and people of color to maintain financial viability for its investors; and

WHEREAS, the United States has a private prison bed capacity of over 130,000 beds, and most private prison contracts include contract clauses guaranteeing maximum occupancy; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress mandated that 34,000 immigrant detention beds be filled each night in 2013; and

WHEREAS, detained immigrants are prosecuted as criminals with prison sentences, to be served in private prisons, ranging from 180 days to over 10 years for infractions that were handled primarily by the United States' civil legal system resulting in fines rather than incarceration prior to the Bush-Cheney Administration; [2] and

WHEREAS, most detained immigrants including children, survivors of torture, and refugees do not have an attorney because immigration law does not guarantee immigrants a right to counsel;[3] and

WHEREAS, the average daily cost of maintaining a system of immigrant detention could cost the United States \$5.05 million in fiscal year 2014;^[4] and

WHEREAS, the United States faces a budget deficit in excess of \$642 billion that now accounts for 4% of the country's Gross Domestic Product; ^[5] and

WHEREAS, several United States judges have publicly questioned and cast doubt on the claim that detention deters unauthorized migration;^[6] and

WHEREAS, detainees in private prisons are paid as little as 3 cents an hour for their labor;^[7] and

WHEREAS, private prison industry detains immigrant workers who are mothers and fathers, some of whom have lived in the United States since childhood, and separates them from their community, children, spouses, and family; and

WHEREAS, the profits of the private prison industry are dependent upon pro-incarceration policies, exploitation of detained immigrants and incarcerated people of color, and continued investment in the industry's stocks and debt

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL CIO calls upon all local governments and public office holders within its jurisdiction to require the financial institutions that invest any public funds through stocks, bonds or other securities to wholly divest those investments from the private prison industry and create a portfolio screen preventing any future investments in the private prison industry: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL CIO calls upon all local governments to prohibit any and all persons acting on their behalf from entering into any financial relationships with private prison companies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL CIO calls upon CALPERS to divest all of its holdings in the nation's two most notorious private prison companies, the Corrections Corporation of America and the GEO Group; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Sacramento Central Labor Council, AFL CIO calls upon Senator Diane Feinstein and her colleagues on the US Senate Appropriations Committee to deny funding for the operation and construction of CAR prisons or any other facility whose purpose is to incarcerate immigrants; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall be sent to the Council's affiliates and sister central labor bodies urging them to act in a like manner.

[1] <http://www.thenation.com/article/173122/what-does-millions-lobbying-money-buy-five-congresspeople-pocket-private-prison-indus#>

[2] Operation Streamline: Costs and Consequences

[3] <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/sunday-review/immigrant-detainees-and-the-right-to-counsel.html>

[4] National Immigration Forum, The Math of Immigration Detention

[5] <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/44172>

[6] <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-09-24/congress-fuels-private-jails-detaining-34-000-immigrants>

[7] Jails Fargo: Banking on Detention