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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 South Bay Labor Council 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 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, detained immigrants are prosecuted as criminals serving sentences for infractions that were handled primarily by the US civil legal system resulting in fines rather than incarceration prior to the Bush Administration; [1] and

WHEREAS, the average daily cost of maintaining a system of immigrant detention, \$5.05 million, could cost the United States \$1.9 billion in fiscal year 2014;[2] and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Bay Labor Council 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 South Bay Labor Council 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 South Bay Labor Council 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 South Bay Labor Council 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.

Passed by South Bay Labor Council delegates on July 21, 2014

[1] Operation Streamline: Costs and Consequences

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

