



# Keep families together: End immigration detention quotas!

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Immigration detention quotas unnecessarily separate families, deprive immigrants of their liberty, and funnel millions in taxpayer funds to private corporations. These quotas are established in the annual DHS Appropriations Act and in site-specific ICE contracts with for-profit prison corporations.

U.S. Representatives have an important opportunity to eliminate these quotas in two ways:

- **Cosponsor HR 2808, which would prohibit site-specific quotas in contracts between ICE and private operators.**
- **Vote for the Deutch-Foster amendment to the FY2016 DHS appropriations bill, which would end the federal detention quota.**

## The federal immigration detention quota

Despite a decline in the number of undocumented immigrants entering the U.S., language establishing a quota for immigration detention has appeared in every Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act since 2010.

The currently quota language is strikingly simple: “... funding made available under this heading shall maintain a level of not less than 34,000 detention beds through September 30, 2015... .” This detention quota is to be maintained regardless of any demonstrated need for detaining people and keeping them away from their families, jobs, and community.

ICE has looked to private contractors for detention services costing nearly \$2 billion each year. Private prison corporations have jumped at this opportunity to profit on taxpayer dollars, including the two largest detention providers, GEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America. Evidence continues to mount suggesting that these private prison corporations not only profit from denying freedom to immigrants but that they also invest those profits in lobbying activities to promote federal policies that drive detentions. Detainees also report gross human rights abuses in private facilities, including lack of medical treatment, inedible food, extreme temperatures, sexual assault and rape, unsanitary conditions, and prolonged solitary confinement.

Taxpayer money should never be used to deny people’s freedom and line the pockets of for-profit companies based on an arbitrary quota. When less costly, more compassionate community-based alternatives to detention exist, investing in detention is unjustifiable.

For more information, visit [afsc.org/stopquotas](http://afsc.org/stopquotas) or write to [endthequota@afsc.org](mailto:endthequota@afsc.org).



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Service Committee**

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# Please support the **Deutch-Foster FY16 DHS appropriations amendment!**

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## The amendment would:

- Eliminate language in the FY16 DHS appropriations bill requiring ICE to have a minimum number of immigration detention beds available.
- Allow more immigrants waiting for their court date to remain in communities, with the support of their families.
- Save taxpayers money. Community-based alternatives are effective, humane, and cost as little as \$12 /day per detainee.
- Address concerns of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, alike. Ending the federal detention quota is a non-partisan issue. A similar amendment to the FY14 DHS appropriations bill garnered 190 votes.

## “Guaranteed minimum” quotas in detention contracts

Detention quotas also appear in contracts between ICE and for-profit corporations providing detention services, further exacerbating the human and financial cost of detentions.

Approximately 400,000 immigrants are detained each year by ICE. Nine of the ten largest immigration detention facilities ICE uses are operated by private prison corporations. Some contracts between ICE and these private entities include a “guaranteed minimum” clause requiring ICE to pay the corporation based on negotiated quotas, not the actual number of immigrants held at their facility each day.

For example, the contract between GEO Group and ICE for the GEO Contract Detention Facility in Aurora, Colorado, stipulates that ICE maintain a daily average population of at least 300 detainees. If no one is found eligible for imprisonment, GEO is still paid for all 300 slots.

These site-specific quotas create a strong incentive to detain people solely to meet those numbers, which is not in the best interests of our communities. Also concerning are the additional incentives offered by private corporations to drive detention numbers up. A 2014 Government Accountability Office report detailed “tiered pricing” in contracts, essentially offering daily rate discounts when ICE exceeds minimum quotas.

ICE operations should be guided by community needs and sound policy—not the siren call of private profiteers banking on denying immigrants their freedom.

**Please cosponsor HR 2808, the Protecting Taxpayers and Communities from Local Detention Quotas Act, prohibiting ICE from negotiating detention contracts that set costly minimum guarantees!**

## This legislation would:

- Prevent the Assistant Secretary of ICE from contracting with private detention companies for minimum numbers of beds at individual facilities.
- Apply to new contracts, extensions of current contracts, and renegotiations of existing contracts with private providers.
- Reverse incentives to meet detention quotas and thereby interrupt the pipeline that puts immigrants behind bars.
- Save precious taxpayer funds when ICE no longer pays for unnecessary, unused detention beds.