

Resolution to support Maryland SB0478/HB0016: Dignity Not Detention Act

Sponsors: Abby Leibowitz and Elon Atlaw

WHEREAS MCR-SGA has dedicated itself to preserving the diversity of the community and welcoming all students regardless of immigration status.

WHEREAS housing immigrants in private facilities leads to evasion of responsibility and accountability, and is what allowed for the hysterectomy crisis at Irwin County Detention Center¹.

WHEREAS over 70% of detained immigrants are held in private- run immigration prisons.²

WHEREAS private prison companies receive over \$2 billion a year to jail families seeking asylum³.

WHEREAS profiting off of incarcerating families is dehumanizing and unjust.

WHEREAS ICE contracts with private prison companies include fixed prices, meaning private prison companies are paid whether or not detention space is used, creating an incentive for these companies to encourage surplus detention.⁴

WHEREAS private prison companies such as GEO Group and CoreCivic have made contributions to PACs lobbying for harsh asylum practices.⁵

WHEREAS establishing more detention centers will create incentive to arrest undocumented community members for minor violations and significantly harm families in the DMV area.

¹ Schacher, Yael. "Inform. Reform. An Immigration Teach-In." *F.A.I.R.*, 11 November, 2020, Lecture.

² Freedom for Immigrants. "Detention Statistics." *freedomforimmigrants.org*, Freedom for Immigrants, <https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/detention-statistics>.

³ Sozan, Michael. "Solutions to Fight Private Prisons' Power Over Immigration Detention." *Center for American Progress*, Center for American Progress, 16 July 2018, www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2018/07/16/453309/solutions-fight-private-prisons-power-immigration-detention/.

⁴ Chico Harlan, "Inside the administration's \$1 billion deal to detain Central American asylum seekers," *The Washington Post*, August 14, 2016, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/inside-the-administrations-1-billion-deal-to-detain-central-american-asylum-seekers/2016/08/14/e47f1960-5819-11e6-9aee-8075993d73a2_story.html?utm_term=.f6eda22b45e3. ↵)

⁵ "Agency Profile: Department of Homeland Security." *OpenSecrets.Org*, 2019, <https://www.opensecrets.org/federal-lobbying/agencies/summary?cycle=2019&id=201>.

WHEREAS private detention centers resemble jail-like conditions with restricted visits and phone calls, uniforms and stripping of personal belongings despite the fact that immigration is civil in nature, not criminal. ⁶

WHEREAS Freedom for Immigrants, a nonprofit dedicated to abolishing immigration detention and immigration reform has endorsed the bill. ⁷

WHEREAS F.A.I.R, a student-led countywide advocacy group has expressed support of the Dignity Not Detention Act and has written a letter signed by students who sign out letters.

WHEREAS SB 0478/HB 0016 will prevent local and state governments in Maryland from going into any new contracts with private jails for immigration detention, prevent existing ones from expanding, and ensure no city or town profits off of incarcerating immigrants.

Be It Hereby Resolved that the Montgomery County Regional Student Government Association (MCR-SGA), an organization representing all Montgomery County students, is fully in support of SB0478/HB0016.

⁶ Hustings, Erin. "FAIR Volunteer Training." *DC Detention Visitation Network*, 7 January, 2021, Lecture.

⁷ Entralgo, Rebekah. "Freedom for Immigrants Submits Letter of Support for MD 'Dignity Not Detention' Act." *Freedom for Immigrants*, Freedom for Immigrants, 21 Feb. 2020, www.freedomforimmigrants.org/policy-updates/2020/2/21/freedom-for-immigrants-submits-letter-of-support-for-md-dignity-not-detention-act.