

February 2, 2020

To: House Committee on Judiciary
From: Alonso Oliveros
RE: House Bill 4121

Chair Rep. Tawna Sanchez, Vice-Chair Rep. Bynum, Vice-Chair Sprenger and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary.

Hello, my name is Alonso Oliveros and I am from Independence. I am a community advocate and former member of Causa, one of Oregon's premier immigrant rights advocacy organization. A few election cycles ago, we worked to defeat Measure 105, the effort to repeal ORS 181A.822, Oregon's Anti-Racial Profiling/Sanctuary Law that was passed in 1987 after racial profiling incidents in Oregon particularly in my hometown. Oregon voters overwhelmingly defeated this measure by almost a 2-to-1 ratio (63% No to 37% Yes). This was a huge win to ensure that federal immigration officials would not be allowed to use local and state resources to do their work of enforcing a broken down immigration enforcement system. Oregon's values of welcoming our newcomer and long-time immigrant neighbors without living in fear and anxiety was preserved for the time being.

Unfortunately, one major loophole has been the collaboration between the Northern Oregon Regional Correctional Facility (NORCOR) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials to enter into contracts that partially subsidize NORCOR's facilities and programs for its inhabitants. NORCOR is a four-county public jail that was overbuilt for its needs with the goal of renting beds to reduce local costs. It's been publicly reported that NORCOR's operating costs are approximately \$6 million/year. Former NORCOR administrators have stated that the ICE contracts would've helped raise \$1.3 million. Now that certain public safety levies were passed that provide for a more dedicated funding source, their reliance on the ICE funds seems less productive as it costs NORCOR more to detain people for ICE than it receives from the contracts.

NORCOR administrators (mainly with master's degrees in clinical psychology and licensed professional counselors) wholeheartedly believed that the ICE funds could be used for rehabilitation programs for inmates. They failed to realize how ICE's cruel enforcement activities and tactics on separating immigrant families leave them traumatized and psychological damage thereby potentially perpetuating and increasing emotional harm.

NORCOR was not designed to meet our community's goals of restorative justice and has limited space for programs, education, or mental health services. Its current revenue and reserves are insufficient to meet the infrastructure and operating needs it is facing. This bill would allow NORCOR to get out from under its current ICE contract and free up the infrastructure for the Gorge to move toward programs, education, and services for the community.

I urge you to vote for HB4121.

Thank You,

Alonso Oliveros