

SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Committee House State, Veterans, & Military Affairs
Meeting Date 06/05/2020 Upon Adjournment

Registered	Bill Number	First Name	Last Name	Position on Bill	Representing	Status	Testifying	Text of Testimony
6/4/2020 22:34	HB20-1409	Abel	x.	For	Self	Open	Submitted text	i have been detained since the spring of 2019. Even before the pandemic, I worried about access to medical care and the often unsanitary conditions of the medical holding cell. During the pandemic, I have faced even more frustrating conditions. At the beginning of the crisis as GEO was understaffed, my unit didn't get access to clean towels for days at a time. I also didn't get enough soap or disinfectants. When the facility finally started changing systems because of COVID, we were forced in his cell 23 hours a day, with so many people in a tiny cell it was impossible to actually remain 6 feet away. Sometimes, my cellmates were left in our cell for 32 hours in a row. While we are now finally getting face masks a few times a week, I still worries because they have to wear them and reuse them until they get more. I also worry about the guards bringing in the virus because they are the ones on the outside who interact with vulnerable detainees, as well as with new detainees that are being transferred in from other facilities. My fear of COVID19 and the anxiety that comes with it are very real. I had a nightmare that I was sick, sweating, and unable to breathe or get the help I needed. I don't want to die here at GEO in detention.
6/4/2020 17:42	HB20-1409	Alison	Quinn-Beitscher	For	Coalition for Immigrant Health	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 8:58	HB20-1409	Alison	Quinn-Beitscher	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 8:54	HB20-1409	Alma	Perez Aguirre	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	

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6/4/2020 22:35	HB20-1409	Amber	Skeleton	For	Self	Open	Submitted text	My husband has a condition that causes him to have allergic reactions on his feet. When he was detained, he was experiencing a reaction and was not permitted to receive the proper soaking treatment. His condition worsened, to the point of being unable to walk or stand. After 3 weeks, GEO gave him a wheelchair and finally began soaking his feet, but his condition was still worsening. He then found out that the nurse was using Iodine in the solution for his feet, which he is allergic to, as listed on his allergy sheet. He made the nurse aware of this and she apologized, stating, "I'm sorry, we don't have time to check every single person's allergy sheet". At this point, he had lost his ability to walk completely and was moved to an off-site healthcare facility to recover, where he discovered his condition had developed into a staph infection. I sought out help from the local health department and found out that they had already attempted inspection of the facility, but GEO chose to pay a fine rather than allow them inside.
6/5/2020 9:00	HB20-1409	Ana	Banuelos	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/4/2020 22:28	HB20-1409	Annonomous	Immigrant Detainee	For	Self	Open	Submitted text	After the governor announced directives for detention facilities, everyone was placed on 23 hour a day lockdown in their cells. Smaller cells have 4 people per cell and larger cells have 8 people per cell, but no one is able to remain 6 feet apart even if we stood in the corners of the room. Everyone has to call their loved ones, shower, shave, and disinfect their space all in one hour. Some we have been transferred from other facilities, and are sick once they arrive, but GEO has not been providing prompt medical care or making enough releases of vulnerable individuals. We told the guards and staff that there are people getting sick, but no action was taken. One detainee had a high fever and was coughing a lot, which prompted them to finally start taking everyone's temperature and vitals. When staff check vitals, they don't change materials or clean down their tools after every vital check. There are no gloves left and the facility is quickly running out of the necessary supplies. The facility didn't have enough soap for a while and hand sanitizer is banned as it is against policy. Now they are running out of cleaning disinfectants. The toughest thing for all of us is being locked down in the same pod with other people for the whole day.
6/5/2020 9:00	HB20-1409	Baltazar Abel	Sosa Valenzuela	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	

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6/4/2020 22:36	HB20-1409	Brenda	x.	For	Self	Open	Submitted text	The food at GEO is basically inedible, and said that people are going hungry and can't afford the commissary. And the guards have made it harder for those inside to have enough food-- they often throw away stored fruits that were ripening and food leftovers without announcing it. The microwave is outside of the center, and we must go outside to heat up their food, and sometimes they are left there for an hour before someone unlocks the door. We can only use it for 2-3 minutes each, so some dishes are left cold. We only receive ibuprofen, no matter the condition or type/severity of pain we are experiencing. My friend slipped in the shower and hurt her ankle--one of her bones was protruding, and they still only gave her ibuprofen. When there are inspections, the guards frantically tell all the women to clean, and they remove the "2-3 minute" sign from the microwave.
6/5/2020 10:46	HB20-1409	Chris	Klene	For	Center for Health Progress	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:03	HB20-1409	Claudia	Robles	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:27	HB20-1409	Danielle	Loeb	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 10:19	HB20-1409	Danielle	Loeb	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:05	HB20-1409	Daud Ali	Mohamed	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:09	HB20-1409	Dr. Carlos	Franco-Paredes	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:13	HB20-1409	Dr. Janine	Young	For	Self	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:19	HB20-1409	Feven	Berhanu	For	Colorado Peoples Alliance	Open	Uploaded file	
6/5/2020 9:21	HB20-1409	Feven	Berhanu	For	Colorado People's Alliance (COPA)	Open	Uploaded file	

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6/4/2020 22:38	HB20-1409	Miguel	Angel	For	Self	Open	Submitted text	I suffered a broken hand at the hands of a GEO guard in March 2019 that never received treatment, and endured numerous quarantines after several outbreaks of mumps, measles, and chickenpox inside of the center. I became an outspoken advocate from inside of the GEO immigrant detention center for over a year, organizing a hunger strike and prompting a congressional probe into the detention conditions at the GEO facility, as well as a federal lawsuit against ICE and GEO Group. I made the difficult decision that my health could no longer bear the cruel and unfair treatment of GEO detention, and accepted voluntary departure to Mexico, even though I hasn't been there since I was 13 years old.