

September 27, 2007

Assistant Secretary Julie Myers
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
425 I St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Assistant Secretary Myers:

During your confirmation hearing on September 12, 2007, you stated that ICE intends to release revised performance-based immigration detention standards. The current ICE National Detention Standards, released in November 2000 represent the end result of extensive collaboration and consultation among immigration officials, the American Bar Association, and non-governmental organizations who worked together to ensure the detention standards would effectively promote consistent and humane treatment of all immigration detainees. As you know, the current standards include conditions specifications in such essential categories as telephone access, visitation, legal and personal correspondence, medical care, detainee grievance procedures, legal rights presentations, religious practices, and food service. As national, state and local organizations who have been involved in supporting and promoting fair and humane treatment of immigrants in detention, we appreciate the scope and quality of the current standards and see them as a symbol of government commitment to improving and sustaining the human rights of immigration detainees.

Because of our commitment to ensuring and promoting humane conditions and treatment for immigration detainees including meaningful access to legal, social, spiritual and medical services, we respectfully request that you provide a meaningful opportunity for community organizations to review and discuss the new standards with ICE officials. We are very concerned about the imminent issuance of these new performance-based standards and we urgently request an opportunity to review and discuss the new standards in an open process that will promote renewed government consultation and collaboration with the NGO community. On September 12, 2007, at your Senate confirmation hearing, you stated that you intended to give an opportunity for the community to provide input to your office regarding the planned revisions to the standards, review the proposed

standards, and provide comment. In your written answers to the Committee's Pre-Hearing Questionnaire, you indicated that ICE expects to complete all actions related to the Performance Based Standards by September 30, 2007. We hope that you will fulfill your promise to consult with organizations that are serving immigrant detainees and promoting fair treatment of immigrants.

We expect that any newly revised standards will preserve explicit requirements for consistent, fair, and humane treatment of immigration detainees and will advance best practices within the immigration detention system.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

cc: The Honorable Ted Kennedy

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren

Signed by the following national and local organizations:

ORGANIZATIONS

American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee
American Civil Liberties Union
American Friends Service Committee
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Arab American and Chaldean Council
Asian Law Caucus, San Francisco
Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture
CAIR Coalition
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)
Rachel Bengtson, Centro Legal, Inc. in St. Paul, MN
Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Miami, FL
Franciscan Coalition for Justice and Peace
Hate Free Zone
Elanor Acer, Director
Refugee Protection
Human Rights First, New York
Immigrant Detention Project, Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.

Jesuit Refugee Services/USA
Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
Legal Momentum
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights
Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, Esq.
Deputy Director for Legal Affairs
National Immigration Forum
National Immigrant Justice Project
National Immigration Law Center
New Jersey Association on Corrections
North Carolina Latino Coalition
NYSDA Immigrant Defense Project
Sarah Ignatius, Executive Director,
Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project
The Florence Immigration & Refugee Rights Project
The Legal Aid Society
Immigration Law Unit
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center
The Riverside Church Sojourners Ministry with Detained Immigrants, New York City
Stop Prison Rape
South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow
South Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children
Gideon Aronoff, President and CEO, The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)

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