

Jackie Goldman - Providence, RI

In support of H 5274 and H 5225

To the members of the Rhode Island House Judiciary Committee:

I write to you today as a Rhode Island resident, a public health researcher, a Jew, and someone who believes that people should be have the freedom to immigrate, initiate asylum claims, and not face legalized terror as a result of trying to find safety or a better place to live. I strongly believe that all people have the right to pursue immigration and they should not have to fear about being rounded up without a warrant or about being placed in a detention facility rife with human rights abuses.

I think about the fact that in the 1930's my great grand parents had to flee from their homes in order to escape the Pogroms and the expansion of the Nazi party. They got on ships with few possessions and prayed that they would be able to get into the US by way of Ellis Island. Many Jews and others were not successful and got turned back and were murdered as a result. In an age of international dictators, climate refugees, and political violence, it is essential that people have the opportunities my ancestors did.

In this age of ICE being able to operate without impunity or checks on their power, it is more important than ever that Democratic states use their voice and their power to fight back against fascist machinery and end contracts with money-making prisons that have long histories of violence against incarcerated individuals. The Rhode Island General Assembly has the opportunity to follow the footsteps of other states who have already taken steps to reduce the presence of ICE and private prisons in their states.