

Testimony in Support of H-5724: An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government –
Detention for Federal Civil Immigration Violations

Representative Robert E. Craven, Sr., Chair
Representative Carol Hagan McEntee, First Vice Chair
Representative Jason Knight, Second Vice Chair
House Judiciary Committee

Submitted by:
Kelly Lynn Bouchard

Date of Hearing:
Thursday, April 10, 2025

Dear Chairperson and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to you as a concerned resident who supports the passage of bill H-5724.

It has been well documented that ICE operations in the United States frequently impose inhumane treatment upon those who are detained. Since 2003, over 200 people have died in ICE custody. The Wyatt Detention Facility in Central Falls is no exception to abusive practices – a report recently published by the Rhode Island-based mutual aid group AMOR shares the testimonies of 13 detainees who endured harsh conditions during March 2025, including medical neglect, inadequate distribution of hygienic supplies, and racially-motivated verbal attacks.¹ I do not want our state to support a facility that treats a largely disadvantaged population so barbarically, especially when Central Falls is home to a large immigrant community.

Beyond the humanitarian concerns that ICE detention centers raise, cities should not rely on detention centers for economic development. Individuals are often detained for months at a time, resulting in a large sum of lost wages and significant disruptions to their economic stability. Financial strains are further exacerbated by the exorbitant costs of basic services, such as making phone calls to family members. Furthermore, all members of the community have to shoulder the burden of the \$164.65 that it costs per day to support a single adult detainee.² Rhode Islanders' tax dollars should not be used to maintain facilities that enable physical, emotional, and economic harm to occur.

I believe H-5724 should be passed to put an end to these practices at Wyatt Detention Center. I thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,
Kelly Lynn Bouchard

Sources

1. Report on ICE Detention at the Wyatt Detention Facility
(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ezWbTWIVb5bEW2kB7EDL9S-zpeESgujM/view>)
2. Featured Issue: Immigration Detention and Alternatives to Detention
(<https://www.aila.org/library/featured-issue-immigration-detention-and-alternatives-to-detention?limit=200>)