



June 20, 2017

Robert Masson
President

The Honorable Mark Stone
Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Matthew Hughes
Vice-President

Ian Anderson
Treasurer

RE: SB 29 (Lara) - SUPPORT

Ryan Huizinga
Secretary

Dear Chairman Stone,

The Riverside Sheriffs' Association strongly supports SB 29 which eliminates the utilization by local governments of for-profit, private prison corporations for the detention of immigrants in California.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that main objective of these Wall Street private prison cash-cows is to maximize profits for their shareholders. For-profit private prison companies accomplish this goal by implementing relaxed hiring standards, reduced staffing levels, inadequate employee training and by paying their workers substantially less in wages and benefits when compared to professional, public correctional peace officers.

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This is evident in the recent, highly publicized shortcomings and deaths which have occurred at the for-profit, immigrant detention prison in Adelanto, San Bernardino County.

Earlier this month (6/13/17), Mother Jones ran an article titled, ***Refugees In a Troubled Private Detention Center Are On Hunger Strike*** that read:

On Monday morning, guards at the Adelanto Detention Facility allegedly attacked nine detainees, all members of a refugee caravan which arrived at the US-Mexico border in May. On Monday morning, according to two of the caravan organizers, Tristan Call and Alex Mensing, the group delivered a letter of grievances to prison officials and demanded a meeting with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). At that point, say Call and Mensing, who spoke with the refugees after the incident, guards allegedly beat the men, "drenched" them in pepper spray, handcuffed them, and placed them in restrictive housing. It was then, ICE claims, that members of the caravan announced their hunger strike. "They described their shirts as literally being soaked with [pepper spray] and were forced to shower in hot water," which intensifies the pain, says Mensing. "They also beat them and bashed them against a wall, knocking a dental crown out of one of the guy's mouth." Call adds, "They said the other prisoners shouted for the guards to stop but weren't able to do anything."

Unfortunately, this type of occurrence is all too-common in these private prison corporation facilities that routinely place profits over professionalism and humane treatment of immigrant detainees.

Web Address:
WWW.RCDSA.ORG

Stocks for the out-of-state prison corporations are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and must meet the financial goals of the institutional investors. As the CEO of the largest for-profit private prison company, Corrections Corporation of America, once stated, "Inmates are a commodity in our line of work."

Private, for-profit prisons continue to treat their charges as “commodities” and “lower the bar” when it comes to the entire corrections profession. While we in the public sector are constantly trying to improve operations, the private, for-profit corporations seek only to improve profits.

The 4,000-plus members of the RSA support efforts that improve public safety and save precious tax dollars. SB 29 accomplishes both of these objectives. Private prison companies make all of us in local, state or federal corrections look bad.

The Riverside Sheriffs Association strongly supports SB 29 and we respectfully request an AYE vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Masson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Robert Masson
President, RSA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Sherman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Ryan Sherman
Legislative Advocate, RSA