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IMMIGRANT DETAINEES AT ETOWAH COUNTY JAIL LAUNCH HUNGER STRIKE TO PROTEST HORRIFIC FOOD CONDITIONS

Gadsden, AL— A group of immigrant detainees in Unit 9 of the Etowah County Detention Center began a hunger strike on January 23rd. The protestors, who are being held indefinitely by ICE, are resisting the longstanding inhumane conditions at the jail.

For years, people in ICE detention at ECDC have reported the foul and inhuman conditions in this facility, such as rotten food and lack of access to outdoor time. Recently, former Etowah County Sheriff, Todd Entrekin, came under scrutiny for [profiting](#) from the neglect. The need for the Etowah County Detention Center to meet the basic needs of people under their custody has been a persistent battle that resulted in former Sheriff Entrekin losing his [election](#).

“[Unit 9] was the unit where I was housed. My heart goes out to them,” said R.M. who was formerly detained at ECDC. “The hard part is that you get exhausted after those hunger strikes. You just hope that somehow authorities and people are going to finally listen or understand that these are not animals living in those quarters, they’re people. But what comes after is silence and the crackdown on inmates.”

Gabriel Cabán Cubero, Enforcement and Detention Organizer at Adelante Alabama Worker Center said, “We stand in solidarity with the protestors; they are putting themselves at risk of retaliation in order to practice their first amendment right. The only solution to these grave and systemic problems is to terminate ICE’s contract with Etowah County and release the detainees caged there in these horrific conditions.”

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The Shut Down Etowah campaign is made up of individuals and civil, immigrant, and human rights organizations based in Alabama and across the country that are committed to ending the human rights abuses at the Etowah County Detention Center. We believe Etowah is far too broken to be fixed—the only adequate solution is to close it. Find out more at shutdowntowah.org