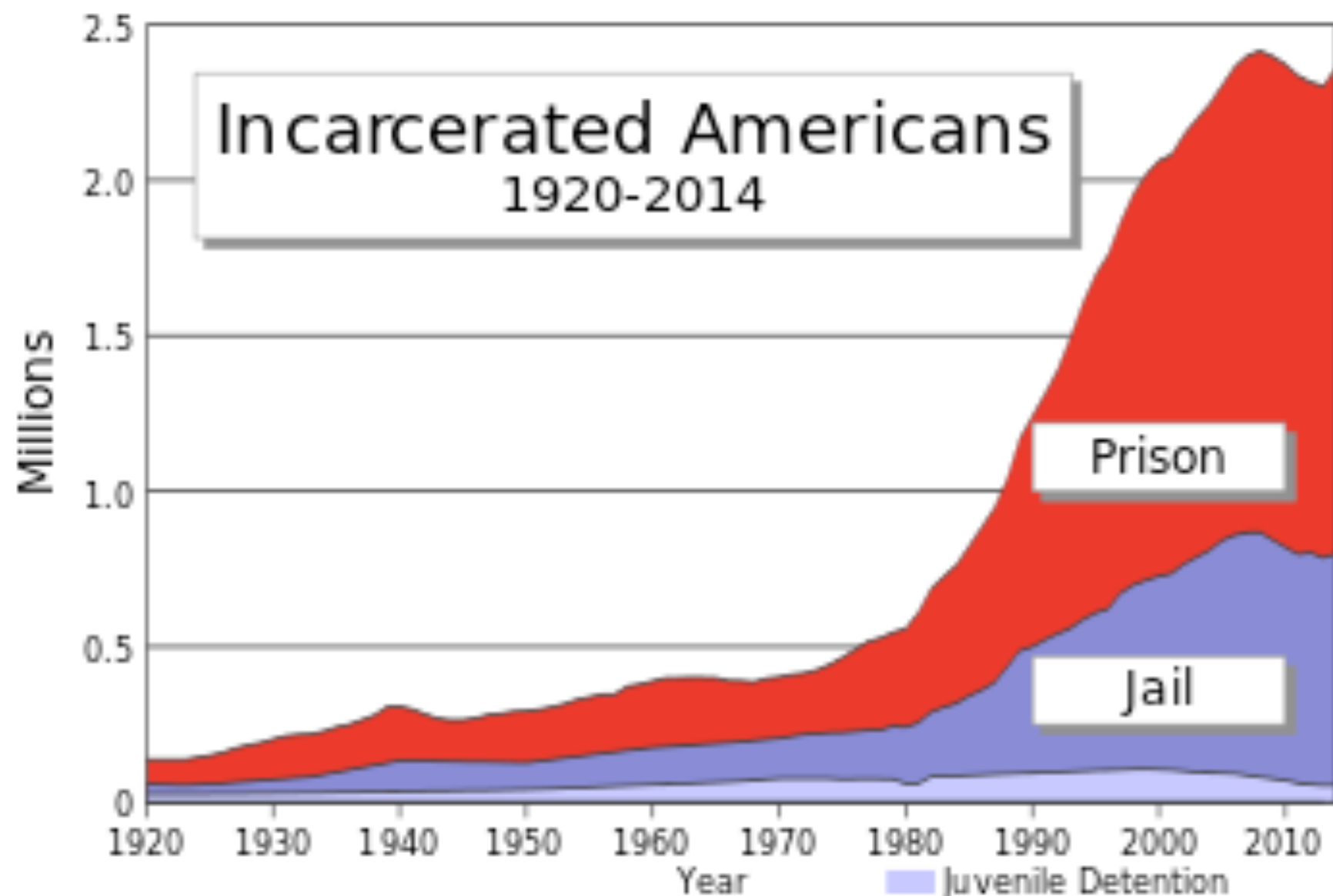


DETENTION 101

& CAMPAIGN CASE STUDY: SHUT DOWN ETOWAH

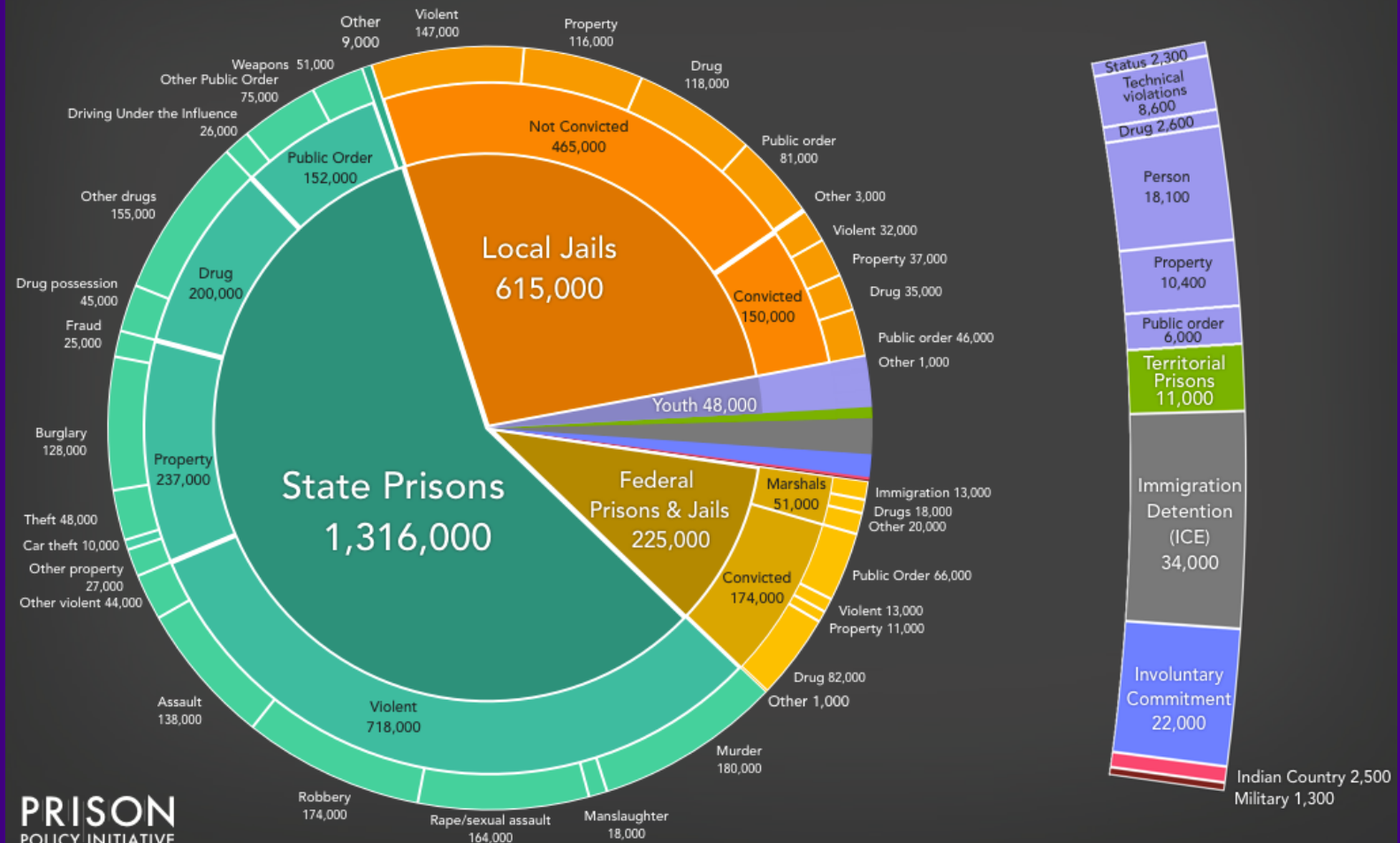




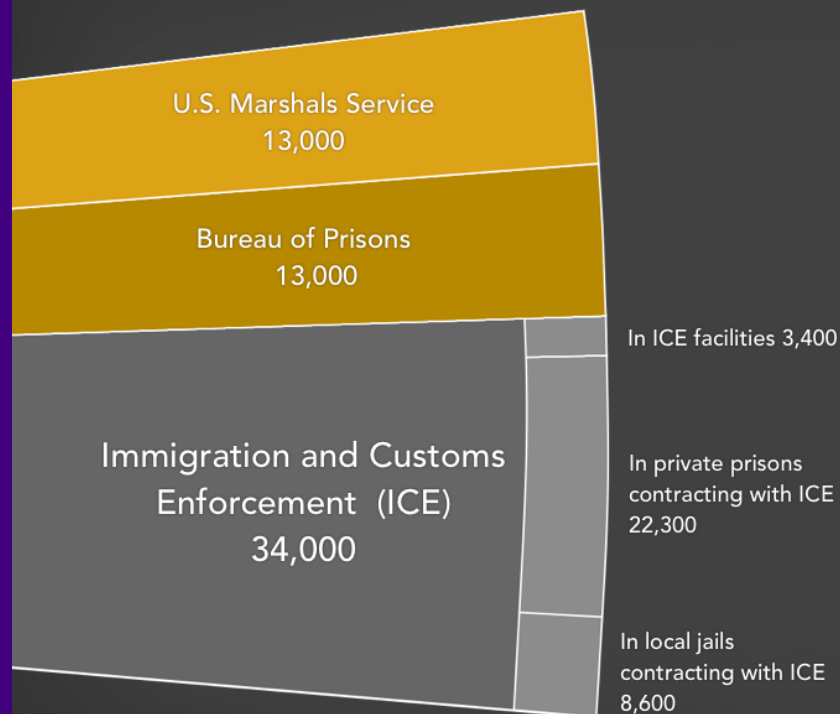
Immigrant Detention in Context: The Mass Incarceration System

How many people are locked up in the United States?

The United States locks up more people, per capita, than any other nation. But grappling with why requires us to first consider the many types of correctional facilities and the reasons that 2.3 million people are confined there.



Immigration offenses put over 60,000 people behind bars



PRISON
POLICY INITIATIVE

Source: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2018.html>

IMMIGRATION DETENTION

DHS CURRENTLY DETAINS TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EACH DAY, AND 70% OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE UNABLE TO BE RELEASED ON BOND BECAUSE FEDERAL LAW SUBJECTS THEM TO MANDATORY DETENTION.

DHS CLAIMS THAT CONGRESS OBLIGATES IT TO FILL A DAILY QUOTA OF

33,400
BEDS



THIS IS THE EQUIVALENT TO

8
BELLARIO HOTELS!



THIS SYSTEM COSTS TAXPAYERS ABOUT

\$2B.
/ YEAR!




50%
OF THIS BED SPACE IS PROVIDED BY PRIVATE, PROFIT-MAKING COMPANIES.



FUNDING FOR DETENTION BEDS HAS INCREASED BY

89%
IN THE PAST 10 YRS



AT LEAST **129**
ICE DETAINEES HAVE DIED WHILE IN CUSTODY SINCE OCTOBER 2003
AND
200
ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT SINCE 2007



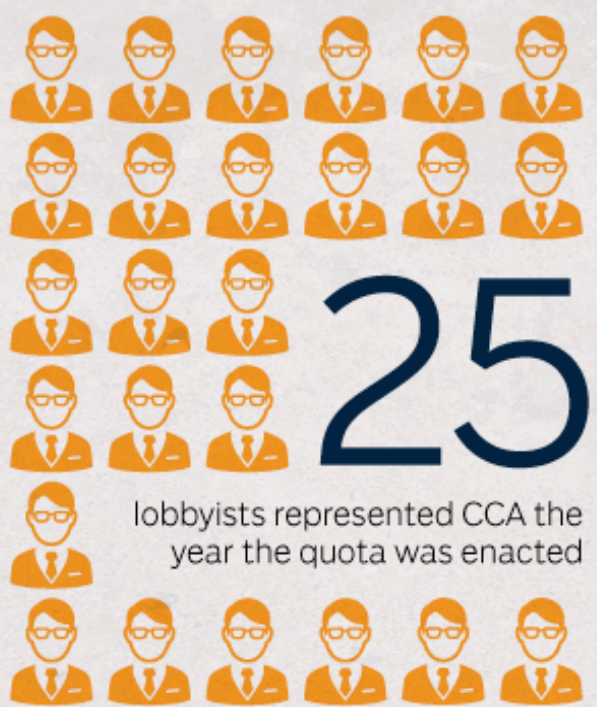
THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN DETENTION HAS GONE FROM ABOUT 70,000 PEOPLE PER YEAR IN 1996 TO SOME 400,000 PEOPLE IN 2012.



A CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS GRAPHIC

Detention means big money for for-profit prisons

Nearly two-thirds of all immigrant detainees are held by the Corrections Corporation of America, or CCA, and the Geo Group Inc.



lobbyists represented CCA the year the quota was enacted

CCA annual revenue from federal contracts

\$752 million



Money spent on lobbying by CCA and Geo Group Inc. since 2005

\$15.8 million

Increase in CCA company value since quota was enacted about

doubled



Source: William Selway and Margaret Newkirk, "Congress Mandates Jail Beds for 34,000 Immigrants as Private Prisons Profit," Bloomberg, September 23, 2013, available at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-09-24/congress-fuels-private-jails-detaining-34-000-immigrants.html>.

Center for American Progress



How long are people in detention?

Immigrants fighting their cases are detained the longest

Average stay



31 days

Average stay for asylum seekers



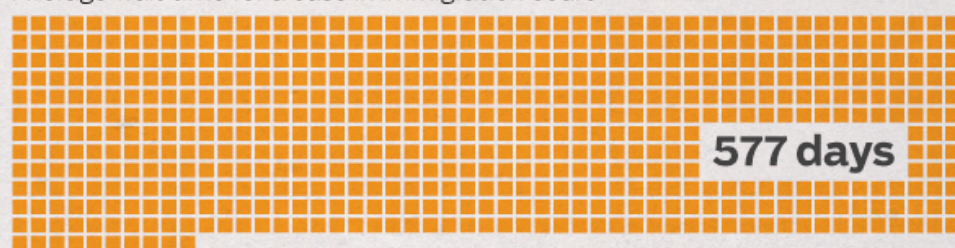
102 days

Average stay for people legally entitled to remain in the United States



334 days

Average wait time for a case in immigration court



577 days

Number of people in ICE custody for **six to eight years**: 12



Sources: Syracuse University Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, "Legal Noncitizens Receive Longest ICE Detention," available at <http://trac.syr.edu/immigration/reports/321> (last accessed April 2014); John F. Simanski and Lesley M. Sapp, "Immigration Enforcement Actions: 2012" (Washington: Office of Immigration Statistics, 2013), available at https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_enforcement_ar_2012_1.pdf; Human Rights First, "Jails and Jumpsuits" (2011); Syracuse University Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, "Average Time Pending Cases Have Been Waiting in Immigration Courts as of March 2014," available at http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/court_backlog/apprep_backlog_avgdays.php (last accessed April 2014).



Immigration Detention – Basic Facts



- In 2013, US government detained approx. 441,000 people in over 200 immigrant jails
- Detention budget: \$2.3 Billion (FY 2016)
- Detention system is overseen by ICE
- 62% of facilities are run by private corporations (CCA, GEO Group); many also run by local governments (like Etowah County)
- Detained population includes men, women, and children; undocumented immigrants (visa overstay and individuals who crossed the border), asylum seekers and individuals fleeing torture, persecution, and economic deprivation, documented immigrants, including Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs)
- Anyone who is not a U.S. citizen can be subject to deportation and detention
- Harsh immigration and criminal laws passed in 1996 and post-9/11 counterterrorism mentality led to huge spike in immigrant detention
- Immigration detention is *civil* detention, intended to last a few days or weeks at most
- There have been 155 recorded deaths in detention since 2003

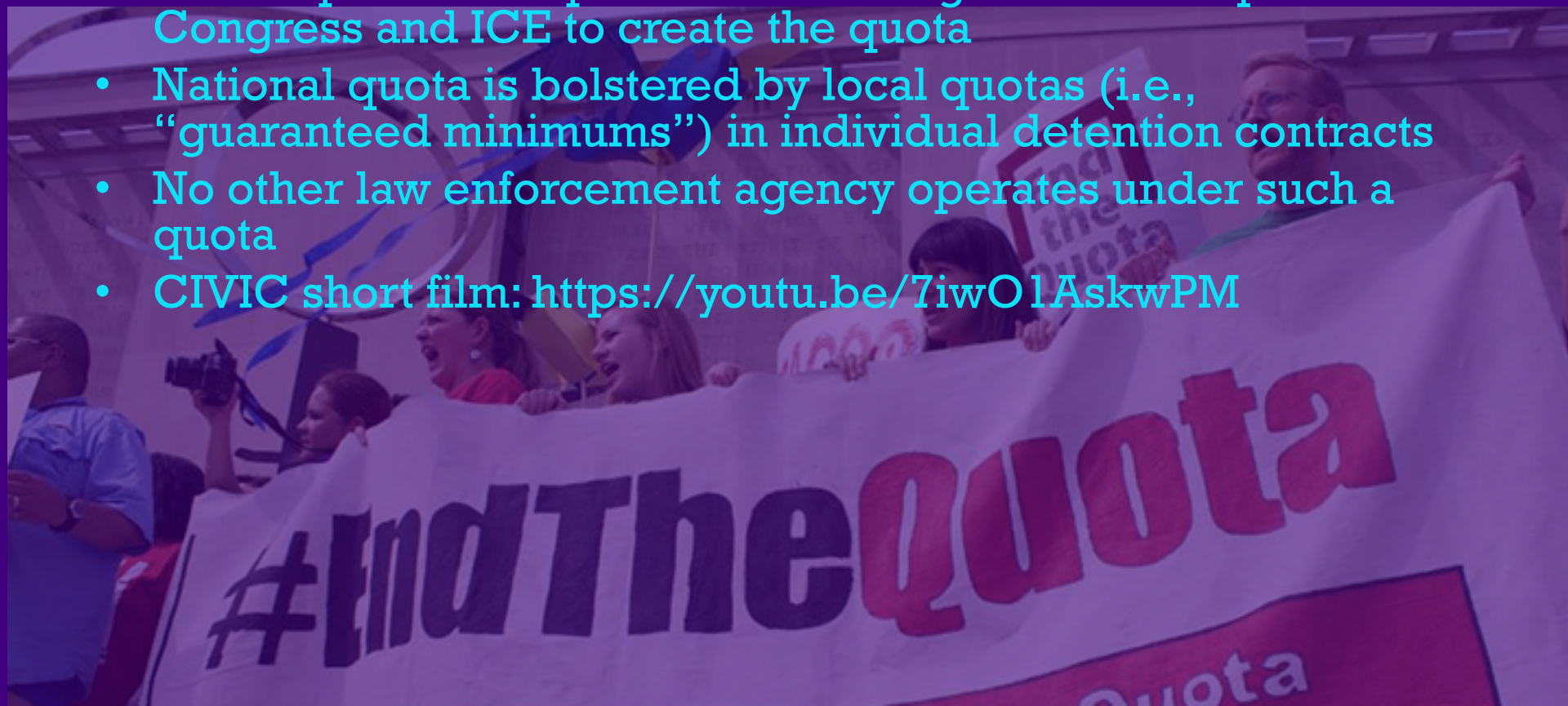
Terminology

- ECDC = Etowah County Detention Center (a.k.a. Etowah County Jail)
- DHS = U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- ICE = U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE is a component of DHS, responsible for enforcing immigration laws in the interior, overseeing detention and deportation system)
- IGSA = Intergovernmental Service Agreement (a contract between the federal government and a local government entity to house ICE detainees)
- FOIA = Freedom of Information Act



The Detention Bed Quota

- Language introduced into 2009 DHS Appropriations Act requiring minimum of 33,400 immigrant detention beds at any given time – increased to 34,000 in 2013
- Private prison companies and local governments pressured Congress and ICE to create the quota
- National quota is bolstered by local quotas (i.e., “guaranteed minimums”) in individual detention contracts
- No other law enforcement agency operates under such a quota
- CIVIC short film: <https://youtu.be/7iwOlAskwPM>



DHS Civil Rights Office “super-recommends” Etowah’s closure

- In its Fiscal Year 2015 report, DHS’s own Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) recognized the repeated past failures to implement recommended reforms at Etowah, and acknowledged that it had issued a “**super-recommendations memorandum**” to ICE leadership recommending that ICE terminate its contract to house detainees at Etowah
- #ShutDownEtowah member organizations filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the memorandum. Recently, some of the documents have been released with redactions.

About Etowah (The Facts)

- Etowah is an IGSA (Intergovernmental Service Agreement) facility – ICE contracts with Etowah County to house immigrant detainees in county jail
- Etowah is ICE's warehouse for prolonged detainees – many have been detained for months or years, and may never be deported
- Currently holds about 300 male detainees – from all over the U.S.,
 - many nationalities
 - longtime U.S. permanent residents
 - asylum seekers and those who fear persecution in their home countries
 - stateless individuals and detainees from countries that lack repatriation treaties with the U.S. or routinely do not accept deportees
- Etowah charges ICE one of the lowest per diem in the country - \$45 per detainee per day;
- AL law allows Sheriff to pocket additional savings (For now)
- Extremely isolated – hours from nearest major urban center and hundreds or thousands of miles from detainees' families, support networks, and lawyers (if they have one)
- Numerous reports of systemic abuses and violations, facility has promised reform but failed to deliver

About Etowah (The Stories)

About Etowah (The Stories)

Advocates, independent monitors, and detainees have made numerous reports of grave, systemic abuses at Etowah:

- Meager, rotten, and barely edible food
- Denial of essential medical and mental healthcare
- Isolation and deprivation, no access to the outdoors - never
- Minimal to no programming
- No legal orientation program or other legal services
- Loved ones can only visit by video monitor, exorbitant phone rates
- Physical and verbal abuse by ICE and county officers
- Excessive and retaliatory use of solitary confinement
- Extremely prolonged detention – many detained over a year, some for over four or five years

Meager Portions

- “imajinate, yo entre pesando 180lbs, y ahora solo peso 149lbs, buen lla sabes que de las tres comidas que se nos siruen, si las juntamos los 3 , solo se hace una sola, como si solamente comiernos una vez al dia” - PR

Poor Food Quality

- “... the food quality is so poor that sometimes I wonder if it’s the intention of Alabama to punish immigrants for coming into the United States... The detainees here believe that their food quality and quantity are purposefully intended to be poor just so we buy commissary.” - MD
- “...the one thing I hate about this Etowah is the food. Sometimes I wake up in the morning with tears on my face, the food they give here is very bad. To be honest, with you even your dog you will not give her the type of food we eat here...” - ST

Recreation / Outdoors

- “... I have been here in Etowah for 5 months and I have never seen a sun with my eye. All I see in this facility is wickedness and heartless people. I am leaving [sic] with peoples who leave [sic] all they life in jail.” - ST
- “We don’t go outside unlike some detention centers I’ve been to. Some detainees have been here for over a year, without getting sun rays! Only God knows the amount of hurt that brings to our souls.” - M

Lockdown

- “During lockdown hours, detainees are to remain in their cells. Our time spent here couldn't be any more depressing during lockdown hours! That's when most of us “beat ourselves” for endeavoring to come to America to pursue freedom in the first place.” - MD

Campaign Goals

1. End immigrant detention at the Etowah County Detention Center in Gadsden, AL
2. Secure release of individual Etowah detainees subject to prolonged detention and civil rights abuses



Campaign Tactics

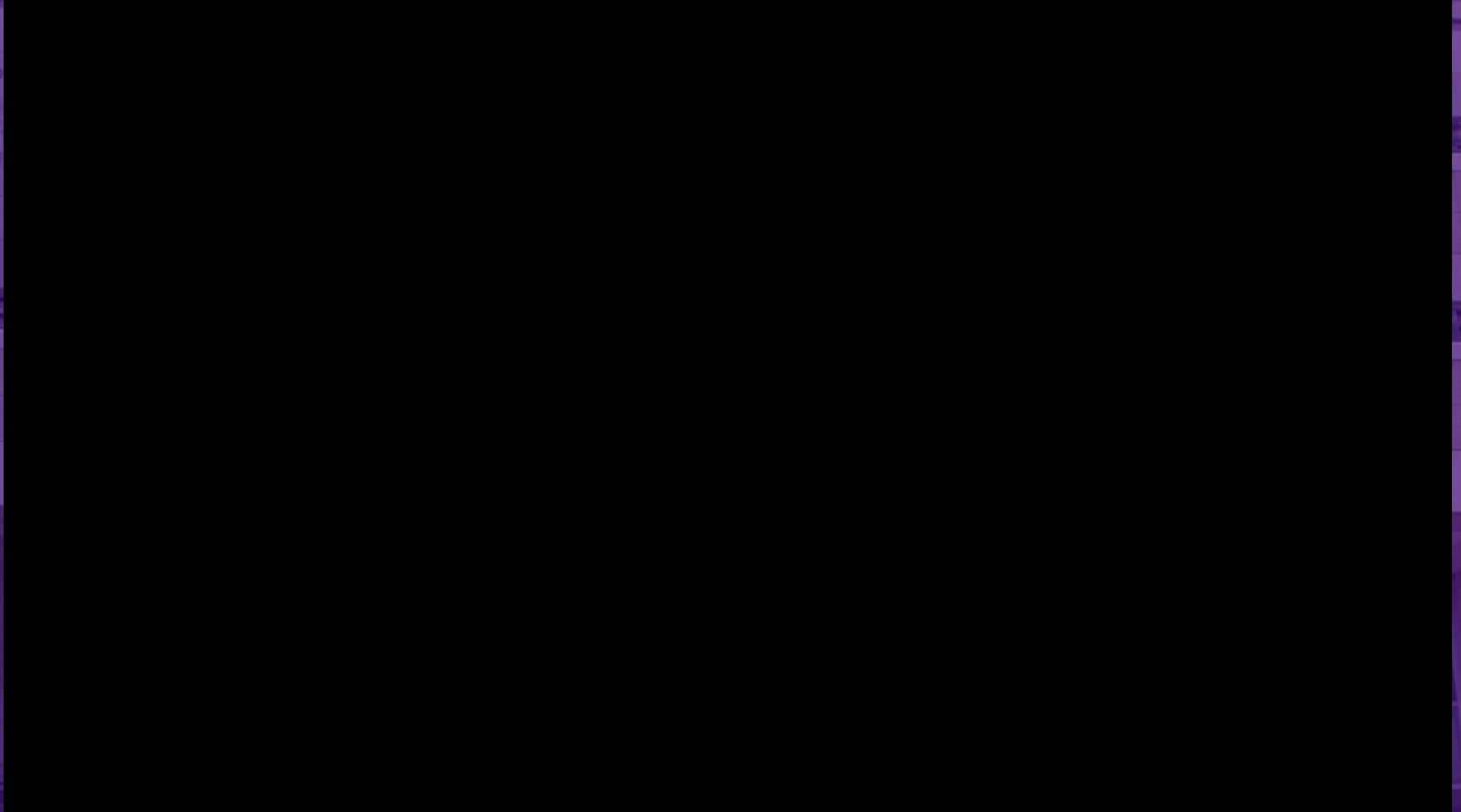
- Organizing tactics:

- Build a network of Alabama residents, social justice organizations, faith communities, and detainees' family members committed to supporting campaign
- Media advocacy (press and social media) to publicize abuses and humanize detainees
- Direct actions at the detention center (vigils, concerts, protests, marches, sit-ins)
- Public campaigns calling for a detainee's release
- Pressure DHS/ICE and county officials to terminate contract through public letters, petitions, and in-person meetings

- Legal tactics:

- Civil rights litigation and administrative complaints
- Habeas corpus petitions for prolonged detainees
- Legal support for direct action and public pressure strategies

#ShutDownEtowah



Campaign Members



www.adelantealabama.org



www.acij.net



www.aclualabama.org



www.endisolation.org



www.detentionwatch.org



www.familiesforfreedom.org



www.gbm.org



www.nationalimmigrationproject.org



www.southernersonnewground.org

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.

DIRECT ACTIONS @ ETOWAH



Father's Day Serenade

CHANT DOWN THE WALLS

June 2015





Vigil to Restore Visitation

August 2015



Protest against Hunger Strike Retaliations

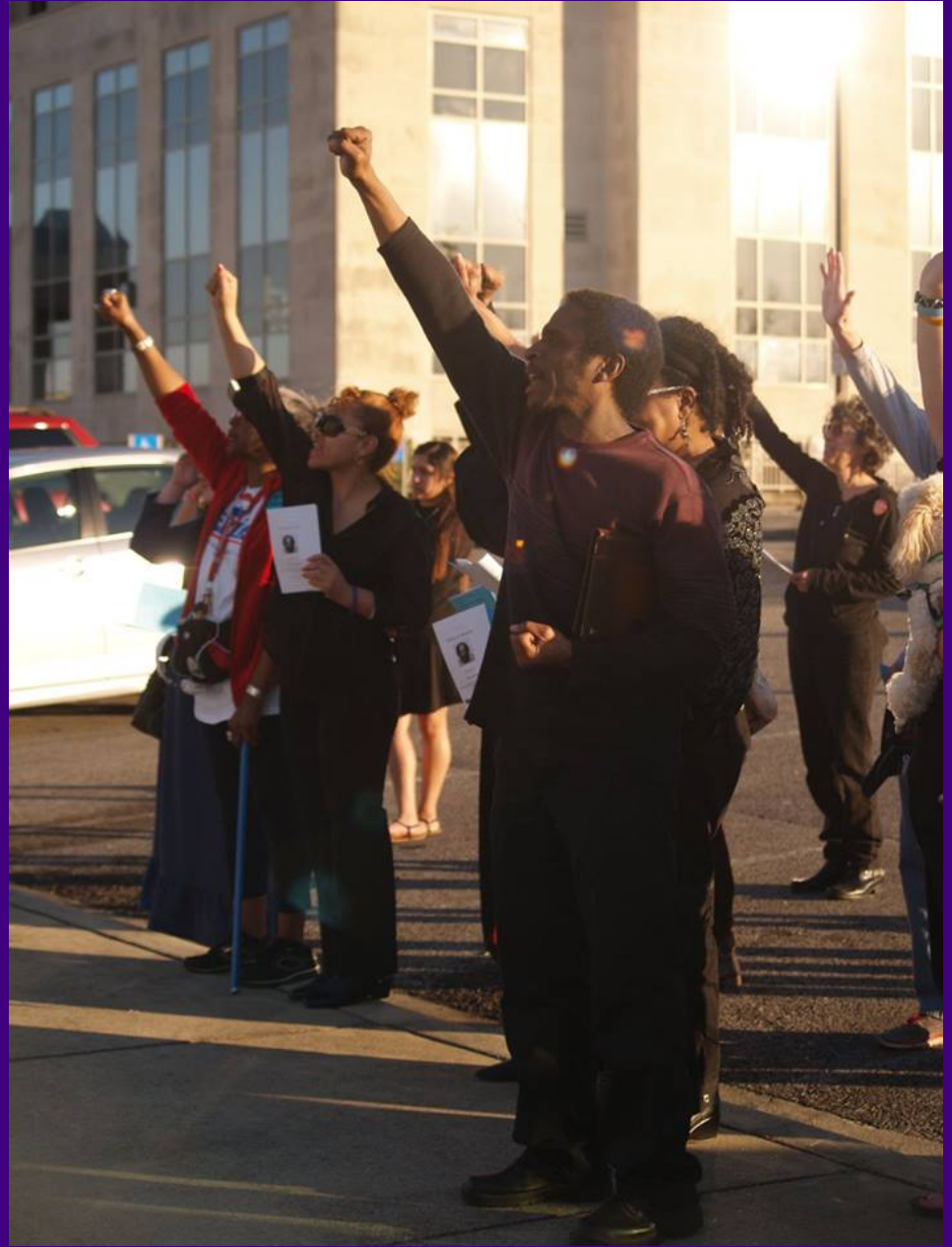
November 2015



Memorial Service for Teka Gulema

February 2016



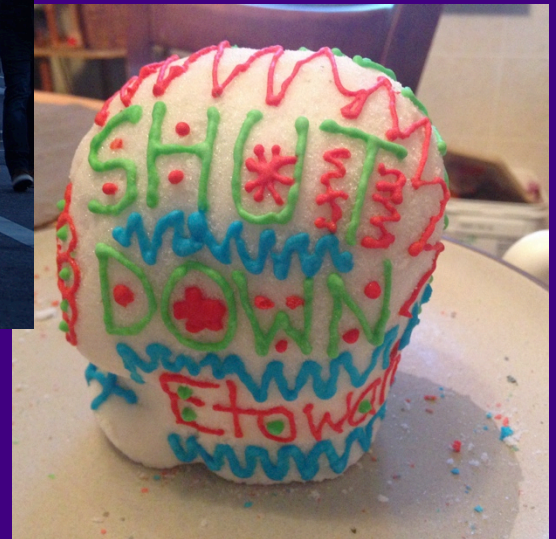
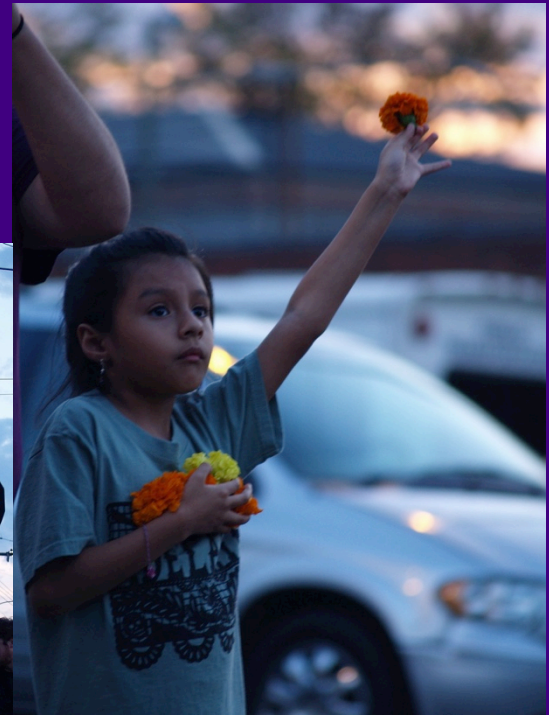


“Super-recommendations memo” FOIA Press Conference at 16th Street Baptist Church September 2016



Day of the Dead Processions

November 2016 & 2017



Easter Vigil

April 2017

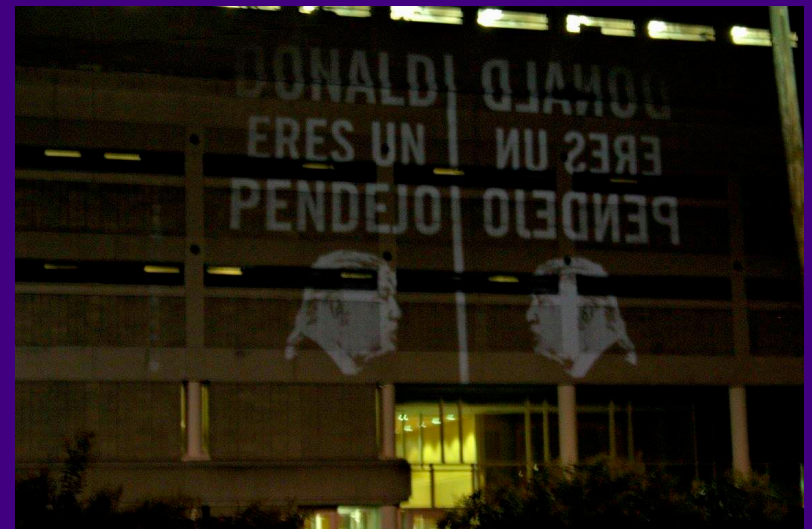


Rally against Criminalization

May 2017



Darkness
into Light
vigil
July 2017



Etowah People's Tribunal

April 2018





OUR KIDS



Andre
Ayala

Alfredo
Baca

FC
DETENIDOS
AQUI

REUNION
ARE
CANINES

FREEBOM
FOR THE

THANK

YOU!!! 😊



How can I get involved?

- Write a letter to a detained person
- Visit a detained person w/ the Etowah Visitation Project
- Attend a vigil or direct action at the jail
- Host a community meeting like this one at your home, church, business or organization
- Etowah Co. residents: call and write to your commissioner and attend County Commission meetings
- Follow @ShutDownEtowah on social media and sign up for our email list
- Learn more: visit www.shutdownetowah.org/Resources