THE CIBOLA COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

WHAT IS CIBOLA?

Cibola County Correctional Facility located in Grants, NM, was previously a criminal correctional prison that was shut down in October 2016 due to inhumane conditions that resulted in several inmate deaths. The exact same facility reopened in January 2017 to detain immigrants under a new $2.5 million/ month contract with Immigrations Customs Enforcement (ICE). The prison is run by CoreCivic, formerly the Corrections Corporation of America.

The yearly ICE contract is worth $30 million. Essentially, the federal government uses taxpayer dollars to pay CoreCivic $2.5 million per month to house approximately 847 detainees at the prison. CoreCivic earns an additional $55 per detainee per day housed above the minimum number, while Grants – one of the most impoverished counties in the country – takes only a $.50 cut per detainee per day.

WHO IS HELD AT CIBOLA?

The vast majority of immigrant detainees at Cibola are political asylum seekers and most have passed a credible fear interview proving that any reasonable individual would have feared for their lives if they were in their shoes. They have come here from all over the world - Central America, Africa, Asia - fleeing violence and persecution. Many of the asylum seekers presented themselves at a US port of entry on the border, asking for political asylum, and have committed no crime.

The prison has a male immigrant population as well as the only transgender pod in the country. Women and children are held at other similar facilities in other parts of the country.
While the immigrant population detained in Cibola have often committed no crime, they live in conditions fit for no human. The 1,100 bed detention center in Grants, NM is notorious nationally for unlivable conditions, health violations, solitary confinement and prison labor. Asylum seekers at Cibola face:

**INDEFINITE DETENTION**

- Historically, political asylum seekers detained at Cibola were being categorically denied parole regardless of their circumstances. This changed over the summer of 2018, but parole is still infrequent. Detainees spend an average of 6-8 months in Cibola, and some stays last over a year.
- There are no federal immigration courts in the state of NM and detainees have minimal access to legal counsel. The male population at Cibola is assigned to the El Paso immigration court which has only a 1% approval rating for asylum cases. Most will eventually be deported back to the country they fled.
- Detainees face major barriers to accessing communication outlets to gain evidence for their cases, and Cibola is not subject to FOIA requests.

**HEALTH VIOLATIONS**

- Cibola accumulated more repeat deficiencies in health services than any other private federal prison in operation. A 2012 report found that Cibola was operating without a single doctor. The lack of access to health care has often resulted in death.
- One man who suffered a heart attack in 2017 was treated only with tums.
- Many transgender women have suffered health complications while at Cibola. Roxsana Hernandez, a 33-year-old woman, died of HIV-related complications, a case the ACLU is now litigating with the Dreamers Project.
- Detainees repeatedly speak about how terrible and inedible the food is.

**LABOR VIOLATIONS AND INHUMANE TREATMENT**

- Detainees work for unbelievably low wages—Inmates often work for only $1 a day. The cost of one phone call for 3 minutes is $10. (This is a tremendous obstacle to obtaining important evidence for their cases.)
- Visitation is extremely difficult or impossible due to the remote nature of the facility.
- Detainees are also often placed in solitary confinement for days. Solitary confinement - especially over extended periods - is widely recognized as a form of torture.