



# ICLA

Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs

## Statement on Detention Centers in Iowa

The Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs opposes the opening of detention centers in Iowa. Placing children that have been separated from their relatives in youth homes, foster care or in shelters that become detention centers are not only inhumane and costly practices, but they are also cruel.

Our opposition stems from concern about an Iowa non-profit agency that was willing to open two detention centers in our state. Iowa doesn't have enough bilingual and bicultural professionals to provide the needed services that traumatized detained children need if they were to be moved to this state. We know that family detention is harmful; it has in fact resulted in the deaths of several children.

There are also recent reports of unsafe environments where children lack access to medical care and other basic needs while being detained for long periods of time. This results in physical harm and long-term trauma.

As a governor appointed commission, our number one fundamental objective is to protect families; the practices and services that are in place right now do not do that, and we urge the State of Iowa and its residents to reject such measures in order to protect the lives of all families.

The commission proposes that instead of detention centers, foster care and youth homes, Iowa comes together to support Iowa's sponsors in the process of reuniting with their detained children. This is a long and daunting process of filling out many government forms, proving relationship to the children, getting fingerprinted, and more.

The Commission will establish a taskforce with community partners around the state to support Iowa sponsors in this process.

If you have any questions please contact the  
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**The Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs** is a governor-appointed Commission comprised of public members who:

Study opportunities and changing needs of the Latino population of this state;

Serve as a liaison between the Department and the public;

Recommend legislative and executive action to the General Assembly and Governor;

Establish advisory committees, work groups of other coalitions to achieve goals.

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