

## Immigration Advocates Call for Transparency Regarding Mesa Verde ICE Detention Facility

**February 20, 2019** -- San Francisco – The Northern California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (NCCIJ), along with over 70 legal service providers, issued the statement below regarding the Mesa Verde Detention Facility. The Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco is a NCRRIDN partner organization and houses the attorney coordinator for the network.

Over 70 legal service providers, advocacy organizations and community groups in Northern California are calling for transparency regarding the fate of individuals detained at the Mesa Verde ICE Processing Center (also referred to as the Mesa Verde Detention Facility). Following the announcement that the city of McFarland voted in closed session to end an agreement with the Geo Group Inc. to operate the facility, legal service providers and the clients they represent have not been provided clarity as to the future of the facility.

In response to the lack of information from either U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Geo Group Inc., a coalition of legal service providers issued the following statement:

We are profoundly concerned about the fate of the people imprisoned in the Mesa Verde facility, and what the future holds for them. The fact that we have not been provided any information about whether they face transfer, relocation, or release, leaves legal service providers unable to mobilize and coordinate the resources that may be necessary if this facility were to be closed.

The Mesa Verde facility houses up to 400 individuals, most without legal representation, whose cases are before the San Francisco Immigration Court. Our duty is to ensure that these individuals have access to legal support and that their due process rights are protected.

The past termination of ICE contracts with jails in Northern California resulted in sudden transfers of numerous clients to facilities outside of our jurisdiction, and even out of state, which put a tremendous strain on our limited resources to serve the most vulnerable individuals in our region. Access to counsel is a fundamental right, and any plans to move detained individuals who are in the middle of legal proceedings undermine this right. The uncertainty with regards to these individuals' access to local legal service providers disrupts our ability to coordinate representation and violates the due process rights of these individuals.

Multiple inquiries to ICE and GEO have provided no clarity as to the future of the facility. Therefore we demand to uncover the truth about the future of Mesa Verde:

## **Immigration Advocates Call for Transparency Regarding Mesa Verde ICE Detention Facility (continued)**

ICE and GEO must provide the public clarity as to whether or not the facility is to remain open and operational. If the facility is to remain open, ICE and GEO must provide information regarding any changes in the administration and legal status of this facility.

If the facility is to close, ICE must provide an exact timeline of closure, and what plans exist for the transfer, relocation or release of those detained at the facility.

If the facility is to close, ICE must also ensure that the closure is just and fair. This includes allowing everyone who is eligible for release to be reunited with their families and community, as opposed to being sent to detention facilities hundreds of miles away from legal counsel or community support.

### Signatories:

Northern California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (NCCIJ)  
Northern California Rapid Response and Immigrant Defense Network (NCRRIDN)  
Freedom for Immigrants  
ACLU of California  
African Advocacy Network  
Alianza Sacramento  
Arab Resource and Organizing Center  
Asian Law Caucus: Asian Americans Advancing Justice  
Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach  
Block by Block Organizing Network, Oakland  
California Sanctuary Campaign  
Building Healthy Communities Kern  
Canal Alliance  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies - California  
Central American Resource Center of Northern CA  
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative (CVIIC)  
Cid and Macedo, Inc.  
Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc  
Community Justice Alliance  
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto

## **Immigration Advocates Call for Transparency Regarding Mesa Verde ICE Detention Facility (continued)**

California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) Foundation  
Democratic Women of Kern  
Dolores Street Community Services  
Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin  
Faith in the Valley  
Greenfield Walking Group  
Humboldt Rapid Response Network  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)  
Immigration Center for Women and Children  
Immigration Task Force, Rapid Response Network of Monterey County  
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice  
Innovation Law Lab  
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity  
International Institute of the Bay Area  
Jakara Movement  
Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco  
Kern Welcoming and Extending Solidarity to Immigrants  
Kids in Need of Defense  
La Raza Centro Legal, San Francisco  
La Raza Community Resource Center  
LAGAI -- Queer Insurrection  
Latinos United for a New America aka LUNA  
Law Office of Emilio J. Huerta  
Law Office of Helen Lawrence  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area  
Legal Services for Children  
Lideres Campesinas en California inc,  
Monterey County Rapid Response Network  
NorCal Resist  
North Bay Rapid Response Network: Solano, Napa and Sonoma Counties  
Northern California Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association  
Open Immigration Legal Services  
Pacifica Social Justice  
Pajaro Valley Rapid Response

## **Immigration Advocates Call for Transparency Regarding Mesa Verde ICE Detention Facility (continued)**

Peninsula Temple Beth El  
Radio Bilingüe, Inc.  
Rapid Response Network in Santa Clara County, CA  
Rapid Response Network of Kern  
Sacramento ACT  
Sacramento Immigration Coalition  
Sacred Heart Community Service  
San Diego Rapid Response Network  
Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN)  
Sisters of Mercy  
Social Justice Collaborative  
STEP UP! Sacramento  
Tahirih Justice Center  
The Justice & Diversity Center of The Bar Association of San Francisco  
The Sacramento Family Unity, Education, and Legal (FUEL) Network  
UFW Foundation  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City (UUFRC) Social Action Committee  
University of San Francisco Immigration & Deportation Defense Clinic  
Upper Kern Democratic Club  
Valley Watch, Rapid Response Network  
Vision y Compromiso  
Watsonville Law Center  
Women's March Kern County

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The Justice & Diversity Center (JDC) advances fairness and equality by providing pro bono legal services to low-income people and educational programs that foster diversity in the legal profession. JDC is the largest legal services providers in San Francisco. JDC's primary purpose is the delivery of free legal services to low-income San Franciscans, as well as the non-profits that serve them. JDC delivers free legal services through its Legal Services Programs division, which consists of the Pro Bono Legal Services Program, Homeless Advocacy Project, and the Immigration Program. JDC provides enrichment programs to diverse youth and young adults through its Diversity Educational Programs. JDC's programs

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serve approximately 9,500 disadvantaged San Franciscans a year, with the overarching goal of assisting the community's most vulnerable members with accessing the judicial system and strengthening their personal, professional, and economic security.

The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) is a nonprofit voluntary membership organization of attorneys, law students, and legal professionals in the San Francisco Bay Area. Founded in 1872, BASF enjoys the support of more than 7,500 individuals, law firms, corporate legal departments, and law schools. Through its board of directors, its committees, and its volunteer legal services programs and other community efforts, BASF has worked actively to promote and achieve equal justice for all and oppose discrimination in all its forms, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, sex, disability, and sexual orientation. BASF provides a collective voice for public advocacy, advances professional growth and education, and attempts to elevate the standards of integrity, honor, and respect in the practice of law.