



REVENUE OVER REFUGE:

Private Equity in Immigrant Detention

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PRIVATE EQUITY
STAKEHOLDER
PROJECT

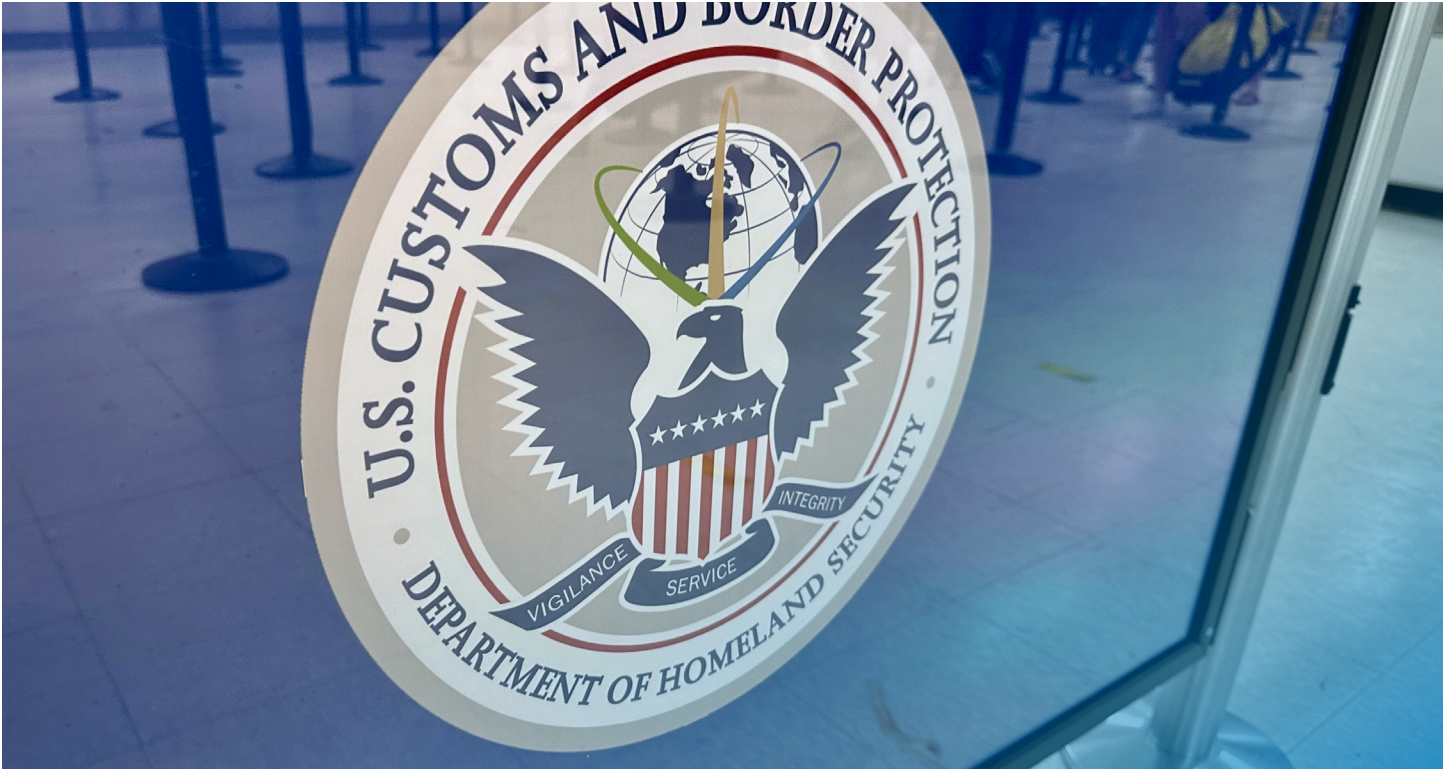
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Key Points

- Hundreds of millions of dollars are flowing from city and federal governments to private equity firms for goods and services used to detain immigrants.
- 63 percent of federally-designated ICE facilities contract with private equity-owned companies for a range of services.
- Private equity-owned companies are winning emergency contracts for managing migrant shelters in cities across the country.
- Companies like Wellpath and G4S have faced investigations and lawsuits and paid out settlements for mistreating immigrants in their care.
- Private equity firms and other alternative asset managers stand to profit from increased taxpayer-funded immigration detention, although alternatives to detention cost less.

Introduction



Since the founding of the Department of Homeland Security in 2003, government surveillance and detention of immigrants and asylum seekers has skyrocketed.¹ Under the Trump administration, communities organized to shut down child detention centers, block ICE deportations, and stop the expansion of the southern border wall. Perhaps due to such immense backlash, the Trump administration removed fewer than 2 million people in four years, while the Biden administration removed 2.8 million in its first two years, continuing the legacy of Trump's Title 42 policy which allowed the president to forcibly expel migrants outside of a court process.² From May 2023 to May 2024, after Title 42 ended, the Biden administration deported 775,000 people, the highest number since 2010.³

From April 2022 to August 2024, Texas Governor Gregg Abbott spent more than \$200 million⁴ to send immigrants to sanctuary cities across the country: Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia,

and Washington D.C., with the *New York Times* reporting Boston, Albuquerque, and Detroit as potential additional destinations.⁵ Making a political point by exerting power over immigrants' lives, promising them free transportation and housing, Governor Abbott went as far as sending two buses directly to Vice President Kamala Harris' residence in D.C. on Christmas Eve.⁶ As of July 2024, Abbott had relocated nearly 120,000 people, many of whom crossed the border to seek asylum.⁷ Governors Katie Hobbs of Arizona⁸ and Ron DeSantis of Florida⁹ followed Abbott's lead, dedicating millions of dollars to transporting people to Democrat-led cities.

In these sanctuary cities, elected officials promise to protect and support migrant communities through the provision of temporary housing in migrant shelters and social support services. With a great influx of people sent by Republican governors, other states suddenly needed to increase shelter capacity.¹⁰

Before people are deported, they are detained. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) manages or contracts with 91 detention facilities across the United States, Guam, and Saipan, where immigrants await proceedings.¹¹ In investigating these facilities in 2019, *The Guardian* wrote:

“The people held in prison-like facilities across the country are not serving time for a crime. They’re waiting for a hearing to determine whether they can legally remain in the country while being kept in what is considered ‘civil detention,’ intended to ensure that people show up for those hearings. Detention, once reserved only for those who threatened public safety or posed a flight risk, is now ubiquitous.”¹²

Life in detention facilities is entirely controlled by the state and corporations that service them — beyond various physical space constraints, detained people have little choice in what they consume, how they communicate with loved ones, and the structure of their day.

Private equity firms and the companies they own profit from detained immigrants, who are often seeking asylum, as a captive audience through contracts with local and federal governments to provide various services.

A handful of private equity firms, drawing on capital from pension funds, foundations, endowments, insurance companies, and other institutional investors have invested heavily in companies providing services to immigrant detention facilities and migrant shelters around the United States. Due to their high risk investment strategies that prioritize high returns, private equity firms are notorious for practices that harm workers,¹³ patients,¹⁴ and tenants.¹⁵ As shown in the PESP ‘zine “From Dawn ‘Til Dusk: Private Equity’s Impact on Incarceration,” people in detention facilities are particularly vulnerable to private equity’s profit-driven schemes as they cannot participate in a free market.¹⁶ Furthermore, private equity firms and the companies they own face little oversight from regulators and are not required to disclose the same level of information to the public as nonprofits or publicly-traded companies.

In September 2024, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) petitioned Congress to end immigrant detention, arguing that “Detention is costly, leads to inefficiencies in processing cases, and has a long track record of human rights abuses. Community-based case management services and legal representation is more humane.” The AILA found that detaining an adult cost \$164.65 per day, while one of ICE’s Alternative to Detention (ATD) programs cost just \$8, and providing case management cost \$14.05.¹⁷ While alternatives to detention have their own issues related to surveillance and faulty technology, the financial case for transitioning away from detention facilities to ATDs and case management is strong. This, of course, would be bad for the corrections industry and its private equity backers. Firms benefit from increased detention – the more people using food or healthcare services, the more money they make.

While public and investor debate around the privatization of detention facilities has focused on publicly-traded companies such as CoreCivic and GEO Group, the private equity-owned firms that provide facility management, telecommunications, and medical services may be more widespread. As immigrant detention has ramped up under both the Trump and Biden administrations, many of these same companies and their private equity owners see business swell. This report gives an overview of private equity investment in the following segments of the immigrant detention industry in the US :

- Facility Management
- Telecommunications
- Food Service
- Healthcare
- Biometrics
- Transportation
- Border Militarization

Facility Management



Several private equity-owned companies contract with federal, state, and local governments to operate or otherwise serve immigrant detention facilities and migrant shelters.¹⁸ “Immigrant detention” is used here to refer to permanent facilities under federal ICE jurisdiction where non-citizen detainees are held for immigration or criminal proceedings. “Migrant shelters” are usually run by local governments for those seeking asylum, and are intended to be temporary.

Gardaworld - BC Partners

GardaWorld provides security services around the world, with more than 130,000 employees¹⁹ working across 21 countries.²⁰ In addition to providing guards for physical security, the company also offers digital security systems and remote surveillance technologies.²¹ GardaWorld has been private equity-owned since 2012, when Apax Partners took the company private in a \$1.1 billion Canadian dollar

deal.²² BC Partners then acquired a majority stake in the company in 2019 for \$5.2 billion CAD.²³

Since 2002, GardaWorld has offered services for migrant and other vulnerable populations in the U.S.; in migrant shelters, GardaWorld provides “centralized housing and meals, medical services, and local transportation.”²⁴ In September 2023, the company signed a \$29 million one-year contract with the State of Illinois for migrant shelter services in Chicago – the amount equivalent to more than 10% of the city’s proposed 2024 budget for the Department of Housing.²⁵ An existing GardaWorld contract with the state of Illinois enabled Chicago to skip the typical lengthy procurement process for new contractors.²⁶ While many of the community concerns about the project were about GardaWorld itself,²⁷ Governor Pritzker halted the project due to environmental issues at the site. The governor announced that GardaWorld would assume the costs of the cancelled

project, and still continue as a contractor for future brick-and-mortar facilities.²⁸

Outside of Chicago, GardaWorld manages facilities in Texas (El Paso and San Antonio²⁹), Florida,³⁰ and Canada. In Canada, migrants at Gardaworld facilities went on several hunger strikes due to poor treatment,³¹ and at least one person died from “medical distress.”³² Denver also canceled contracts after pressure from the community.³³

In June 2023, Denver City Council members considered a \$40 million contract with GardaWorld to provide housing, food, and medical care to migrants arriving in the city.³⁴ The City decided to postpone the contract with GardaWorld after migrant advocates pushed back against it, claiming they had never heard of GardaWorld until the proposal and raised concerns about the company’s experience. The contract also came at a high price; Jamie Torres, then city council president, said “\$40 million for what they were proposing was a huge price tag,” and that the city was “getting taken for a ride by GardaWorld.”³⁵ In July 2023, the Mayor’s office announced that they would not be moving forward with the contract. Denver officials then began exploring the idea of using several providers, including non-profits, to manage migrant services.³⁶

Favorite Healthcare - TowerBrook Capital Partners, Onex

In 2022, private equity firms TowerBrook Capital Partners and Onex acquired Favorite Healthcare Staffing through portfolio company Acacium Group. Based in the United Kingdom, Acacium Group acquired Favorite Healthcare in order to expand its operations to the United States – it claims to be the first healthcare staffing company with locations in the United States, Europe, and Australia.³⁷

After migrants started arriving on buses in August 2022, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot quickly hired Favorite Healthcare in September 2022 to manage the city’s new migrant shelters. In the first year of the contract alone, Chicago paid the company \$57 million.³⁸ By August 2024, Chicago had paid the firm over \$275 million. While companies like Favorite Healthcare may be helpful (and expensive) in situations like the sudden influx of migrants

that prompted the emergency contract in 2022, city official Jonathan Ernst emphasized that what is “not as typical in emergency management is an emergency that goes on for a year and a half.” Though the city pledged to transfer management to more local organizations, only two of the Chicago migrant shelters have been managed by community organizations.³⁹ Though the number of shelters has gone down from 27 to 16, and the city faces a looming deficit, Mayor Johnson extended the contract with Favorite Healthcare to the tune of \$100 million in September 2024.⁴⁰

RXR Realty - Blue Owl Capital

Chicago is not the only city tapping private equity-owned companies for building and managing migrant shelters. RXR Realty, backed by alternative asset manager Blue Owl Capital (formerly known as Dyal Capital),⁴¹ won a contract with New York City to convert a Brooklyn property to a migrant shelter in June 2023. For the company and Mayor Eric Adams, “the deal was mutually beneficial,” wrote the New York Times. “It would help RXR keep its flailing property afloat after having invested more than \$100 million to modernize it, while providing Mr. Adams with a large location to eventually shelter thousands of migrants being bused from Texas.”⁴²

As with Chicago, New York City needed to respond quickly when Governor Abbott placed migrants on buses and sent them north with no support. The city pledged to pay RXR at least \$20 million per year, with the option to renew for up to seven years, long past what many would consider for the scope of an emergency.⁴³ While the lease is set to expire in March 2025, RXR submitted plans for potential redevelopment into a mixed-use facility.⁴⁴

Mobility Capital Finance, DocGo

Beyond RXR Realty, NYC contracted with several private companies, including venture capital-backed Mobility Capital Finance (MoCaFi) and DocGo. The city took on a \$53 million no-bid contract with MoCaFi to distribute debit cards to migrants – six months into its year-long contract, the company had disbursed less than \$600,000.⁴⁵ The NYC Department of Investigation is looking into the



city's contract with MoCaFi as federal agents subpoenaed Molly Schaeffer, the city's Office of Asylum Seeker Operations Director, in September 2024.⁴⁶

The Adams Administration also hired DocGo, backed by asset managers Light Street Capital and Moore Strategic Ventures,⁴⁷ to manage migrant housing in a \$432 million contract. In an audit, New York City Comptroller Brad Lander alleged that DocGo mismanaged the funds at a high cost to the city. For example, Armoni Hotel charged DocGo \$100 per night for each room for rooms that never got used. DocGo then charged the city \$170, totaling \$833,340 in profit for empty rooms.⁴⁸

The audit also found that city administration also mismanaged contracts with DocGo, paying the company at least \$11 million in unused funds. Furthermore, DocGo provided migrants with substandard housing containing mold, insects, and broken appliances, and did not maintain the correct staffing levels. Comptroller Lander criticized both city officials and DocGo for not prioritizing migrants' experiences:⁴⁹

"The fiscal mismanagement coupled with the hazardous conditions and lack of case management is nothing short of cruelty. Thousands of asylum seekers traveled thousands of miles to seek safety and support as they start their new lives and instead were met with infestation, inedible food, and inadequate services. Our audit unearthed what we already suspected—that DocGo never should have gotten into the business of housing asylum seekers."⁵⁰

Caliburn International/Acuity International - DC Capital Partners

In 2018, private equity firm DC Capital Partners merged four companies to create Caliburn International.⁵¹ One of the companies, Comprehensive Health Services, won a federal contract in February 2018 to manage the country's only for-profit detention center for migrant children in Homestead, Florida. The emergency contract originally arranged for the facility to house 500 children; only three months later, the federal government increased the capacity to 1,000.⁵² By May 2019, capacity tripled to

house up to 3,200 minors.⁵³ Each bed at the “temporary” facility cost the government upwards of \$700, while beds at permanent shelters cost just a third of that price.⁵⁴

Many members of Congress expressed concern about conditions for children at the shelter after hearing that many were already traumatized by their journey to the U.S. and experienced further alienation within the facility.⁵⁵ Congressman Julian Castro called the facility “part of a morally bankrupt system,” and declared that “there should be no profit motive in warehousing migrant kids.”⁵⁶ Leecia Welch, then working at the National Center for Youth Law, told NPR that “We hear stories of children who are told from the first day of their orientation that under no circumstances can they touch another child in the facility, even their own sibling, even friends who they’re saying goodbye to after many months of shared intense experience. They can’t hug them goodbye. If they do, they’re told they will be written up and it could affect their immigration case.”⁵⁷

The temporary facility closed on August 3, 2019, though the government continued paying \$720,000 per day through the end of the contract in November of that year.⁵⁸ Despite the immense backlash from migrants and advocates, the Trump Administration awarded Caliburn a contract to manage another youth detention center in El Paso, Texas.⁵⁹

Caliburn rebranded to Acuity International in 2021.⁶⁰ Since then, the company’s work with ICE has continued. In January 2023, ICE launched the Young Adult Case Management Program (YACMP), which monitors 18 and 19-year-old immigrant youth. Advocates claim that “ICE unilaterally and arbitrarily enrolls young adults in YACMP if they are facing immigration court proceedings and are not detained, irrespective of their specific needs.”⁶¹ Though nearly 90 organizations pushed for community-based case management services without ICE intervention,⁶² DHS awarded almost \$20 million to Acuity International in a sole vendor contract to carry out the program (the contract has since surpassed \$23 million).⁶³

Youth need not have committed a crime to be targeted by this program – they could have simply come to the United States as unaccompanied minors and “aged out” of

other care programs. ICE also places asylum seekers and those selected for removal proceedings in the program. The program, labeled as an “Alternative to Detention,” is supposedly about supporting immigrant youth, but mostly has the effect of keeping them entangled with enforcement agencies.

Acuity case managers are responsible for up to 100 cases at a time. Though the program does not include electronic monitoring, youth must call and attend check-ins with their case managers on a regular basis. If a case manager does not hear from a participant within seven days, they are required to report it to ICE. Acuity shares all data from the case management files with ICE – things told to a case manager in confidence could be used against someone in court proceedings.⁶⁴

Other Services

63 percent of federally-designated ICE facilities contract with private equity-backed companies for a range of services (Appendix). The following companies operate in immigrant detention centers:

Company	Industry/ Services	PE Owner(s)	Year Acquired
Keefe/TKC Holdings	Commissary	HIG Capital	2012, ⁶⁵ 2016 ⁶⁶
Wellpath	Healthcare	HIG Capital	2013 ⁶⁷
ICSolutions (Keefe subsidiary)	Telecommunications	HIG Capital	2016 ⁶⁸
ViaPath/GTL/TelMate	Telecommunications	American Securities	2011 ⁶⁹
Securus/Jpay	Telecommunications	Platinum Equity	2017 ⁷⁰
Combined Public Communications	Telecommunications	Argosy Private Equity	2016 ⁷¹

Telecommunications

The majority of ICE contracts with private equity-backed companies are for telecommunications services and tablets. ViaPath (formerly GTL), which is owned by American Securities, and Securus, owned by Platinum Equity, dominate the prison phone and video communications market. The most recent estimates suggest the two companies control nearly 80 percent of contracts for outsourced prison and jail telecommunications.⁷² H.I.G. Capital owns a smaller provider, Inmate Calling Solutions (ICS).⁷³ Detention facilities contract with a single provider, which has historically allowed companies to charge “exorbitant” prices in what is literally a captive market.⁷⁴ In 2018, Securus charged as much as \$22.56 for a 15-minute phone call, while ViaPath charged \$16.50.⁷⁵

In December 2022, Congress approved the The Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act,

which gave the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) the authority to regulate costs of phone calls and other communications in prisons and jails; though the FCC already had the power to regulate prices for calls between states, the Commission did not have authority to do so within states. Furthermore, the bill extended the FCC’s authority to all forms of communication, as video calling has become increasingly popular in the last few years.⁷⁶

In July, the FCC voted to implement the new rate caps and regulations.⁷⁷ The new rates drastically reduce call costs. According to the FCC, “the cost of a 15-minute phone call will drop to \$0.90 from as much as \$11.35 in large jails and, in small jails, to \$1.35 from \$12.10.”⁷⁸ Costs for video calling will still vary, but are capped at \$0.25 per minute for the smallest jails.⁷⁹

This will make it significantly cheaper for immigrants to connect with loved ones while detained. It will also



cut into private equity firm revenues, which have been supplanted recently through profits from tablets. All four private equity-owned telecom companies that contract with ICE facilities offer tablets, where people in detention can pay to access media and other entertainment.⁸⁰

Food Service

In addition to telecom provider ICS, H.I.G. Capital owns TKC Holdings and Wellpath. TKC Holdings provides food, commissary, and telecom services to jails, prisons, and immigrant detention centers. H.I.G. formed the company by combining Trinity Services Group (food services) and Keefe Group (commissary).⁸¹ Mold, maggots, and dirt were reportedly found at two TKC-served facilities, in one instance allegedly leading to unrest and contract termination. In the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Laredo Processing Center in Texas, immigrant detainees complained of TKC's "inedible food and undrinkable, foul-smelling water."⁸²

Healthcare

H.I.G. Capital's prison and detention healthcare provider Wellpath and its predecessors Correct Care Solutions

and Correctional Medical Group have faced concerns for years about whether the company provides sufficient and adequately trained healthcare staff at facilities it serves. In September 2018, for example, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for the US Department of Homeland Security issued a report raising concerns about "untimely and inadequate detainee medical care" at the Adelanto Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Processing Center in California.⁸³ The report highlighted instances of detainees not receiving urgent medical care, not receiving prescribed medications, and not being seen by health providers for persistent conditions for months.

In 2023, the National Immigration Project (NIP) filed a legal complaint against ICE on behalf of Vargas Arellano, alleging that he "was held in immigration detention at Adelanto beginning in April 2019. Throughout the next year, his health conditions required ICE to transfer him at least eleven times for inpatient care at a hospital or clinic."⁸⁴ The case is ongoing as of August 2024.⁸⁵

Biometrics



In 2017, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) awarded military contractor Northrop Grumman a contract to develop a new biometric-based identity management platform called Homeland Advanced Recognition Technology (HART).⁸⁶ This new system would replace IDENT, DHS' existing system, which holds biometric, biographic, and/or location data of more than 270 million people, including youth.⁸⁷

In February 2021, private equity firm Veritas Capital completed its acquisition of Northrop Grumman's IT services business for \$3.4 billion, acquiring the HART contract with it.⁸⁸ The Northrop Grumman business was absorbed by Veritas portfolio company Peraton, a cybersecurity and defense technology company headquartered in Virginia.

Veritas Capital, a tech-focused private equity firm subject to limited regulation, will be ultimately responsible for

managing the data of nearly 300 million people — without their consent.⁸⁹ More than just a database for storing information, HART will be able to track people in real time, allowing DHS to monitor anyone they deem a target. The system does not require someone to have been arrested or crossed a border to be included; profiles are constructed based on data from sources like the DMV, utility services, social media profiles, license plate readers, and more.⁹⁰ HART will also include DNA and face and eye scans to connect individuals to other profiles within the system.⁹¹

In "HART Attack," a 2022 joint report by the Immigrant Defense Project, Just Futures Law, Mijente, advocates raised concerns about this data being owned and managed by Wall Street: "HART is not designed to ensure accuracy nor protect people's rights... HART also puts enormous power to develop these technologies into the hands of corporate entities – first a military defense

contractor, and now billionaire private equity investors – that are not concerned with the rights of communities but rather with maximizing profits.”⁹²

DHS originally priced the system at \$4.3 billion;⁹³ HART is now expected to cost \$6.2 billion.⁹⁴ Furthermore, the project was three years behind schedule as of June 2021, and still in the first phase of development.⁹⁵ DHS claims it “cannot ensure accuracy” of the information collected by the system, and clear limits for what data HART can collect have yet to be determined.⁹⁶ The HART Attack report highlights that the inability for individuals to consent to, opt out of, or know what information is being housed in the system pose risks that violate rights to privacy.

Though the system will track citizens and noncitizens, immigrant rights advocates are emphasizing how this system will be used to expand the surveillance, detention, and deportation of immigrants, in the process separating families and endangering those seeking asylum. The system could also further exacerbate racialized policing and incarceration, as it will also aggregate information from and share information with the Department of Justice and local law enforcement agencies. As described in HART Attack:

“HART promises a fantasy that a vast data collection system powered by militarized technologies will provide security and safety. Instead, it will vastly expand the Department of Homeland Security’s surveillance capabilities and the immigration enforcement dragnet by yielding accurate lists of undocumented people, their undocumented families, and others deemed ‘undesirable.’ HART will put BIPOC communities, including immigrant communities, at greater risk of profiling, arrest, and detention.”⁹⁷

Through Peraton and other portfolio companies in the government services and security sectors, Veritas Capital has control over an alarming amount of data about individuals and communities. Beyond concerns about the HART system itself, the role of private funds controlling data collected about the public leads to questions about transparency and public accountability – two things private equity firms notoriously avoid.

The project has been subject to scrutiny by a variety of groups – the U.S. House Appropriations Committee has requested an independent analysis of HART twice.⁹⁸ In May 2022, a group of concerned advocacy organizations sent a letter to Amazon requesting that the company refuse to host HART on Amazon Web Services.⁹⁹ When the project was still being developed by Northrop Grumman, Investor Advocates for Social Justice filed a shareholder resolution in 2018 asking how it would adhere to its human rights policy considering the risks presented by HART.¹⁰⁰ Veritas Capital has yet to publicly take responsibility for ensuring that these issues are addressed.

Peraton is not the only private equity-backed company contracting with DHS for biometric data collection – Idemia, acquired by Advent International in 2011,¹⁰¹ is the sole source vendor for facial recognition at US airports,¹⁰² having received over \$200 million from the US Department of Homeland Security.¹⁰³ Idemia also has contracts with agencies at the state level in Louisiana¹⁰⁴ and Montana, where state legislatures and municipalities have considered bans on facial recognition.¹⁰⁵

Potential Regulatory Risk from US Congressional Action

In February 2020, Senators Jeff Merkley and Cory Booker introduced the Ethical Use of Facial Recognition Act, which would place a moratorium on federal use of the technology while Congress determines how to regulate facial recognition.¹⁰⁶ Merkley urged fellow lawmakers to take concerns about facial recognition seriously:

“Congress has an important responsibility to make sure that the government does not abuse emerging technology in ways that violate Americans’ right to privacy or that disproportionately and wrongfully single out Americans of color. Facial recognition technology is both a powerful and a problematic new frontier. Before this unregulated market becomes too big to tame, Congress needs to put a moratorium on federal use of facial recognition while we develop responsible and ethical guidelines for its use going forward.”¹⁰⁷

Since Merkley and Booker’s bill, two other pieces of federal legislation restricting facial recognition have been introduced. Representative Don Beyer proposed the Stop Biometric Surveillance by Law Enforcement Act in June 2020, which would prevent federal agencies from using facial recognition software on body camera footage.¹⁰⁸

In June 2021, Merkley and several members of the US House of Representatives and Senate introduced the *Facial Recognition and Biometric Technology Moratorium Act*, legislation that would temporarily halt federal use of facial recognition until Congress passes a law regulating the technology. In announcing the bill, members of Congress cited a national study¹⁰⁹ on algorithmic bias in facial recognition and the experiences of Black men wrongly accused of crimes based on faulty matches.¹¹⁰

In September 2022, Senators Ed Markey and Ron Wyden sent a letter to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) urging the agency to end its use of facial recognition technology. The letter referenced a 2022 Georgetown

Center for Privacy and Technology report which found that “ICE has used facial recognition technology on the driver’s license photographs of almost one-third (32%) of all adults in the United States, and has access to the driver’s license data of almost three-fourths (74%) of them — in most cases without obtaining a search warrant.” The letter included a series of questions for ICE about how the agency uses facial recognition and which companies it contracts with to collect information. The Senators asked ICE to respond to the letter by October 3, 2022. A response has not yet been made public.¹¹¹

Most recently, the *Facial Recognition Act* proposed by Congressman Ted Lieu would prohibit the use of facial recognition without a warrant and probable cause of a felony.¹¹² Furthermore, facial recognition could no longer be used for immigration enforcement or to identify someone at a protest. While it does not go as far as other proposed legislation in banning the use of the technology altogether, the Facial Recognition Act would place strict limits on the largely unregulated use of such tools.

Transportation and Border Militarization



G4S, a security firm with 800,000 employees globally, has been conducting deportations for the U.S. government since at least 2006.¹¹³ Owned by private equity firm Warburg Pincus through portfolio company Allied Universal,¹¹⁴ G4S provides Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and ICE with transportation and security services. Between 2008 and August 2024, G4S' contracts with CBP and ICE amounted to \$1.05 billion.¹¹⁵

Under its contracts with CBP, G4S transports immigrants arrested at the southern border to detention facilities throughout the U.S.¹¹⁶ This includes temporarily detaining immigrants in transit or those awaiting their asylum claims to be processed. G4S has also provided detainee transportation services to ICE field offices and Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) (i.e., deportation) offices in cities like Los Angeles,¹¹⁷ Phoenix,¹¹⁸ San Francisco,¹¹⁹ and San Antonio.¹²⁰

The company has been accused of unlawfully arresting immigrants. In 2022, the ACLU Foundation of Northern California successfully settled a federal lawsuit, preventing ICE from using G4S to arrest immigrants.¹²¹

Beyond physically transporting people near the border, some companies are facilitating increased border militarization.

In 2020, private equity firms American Securities and Lindsay Goldberg announced the creation and acquisition of Amentum. The new company spun out of AECOM, a federal contractor and infrastructure consulting firm. Amentum then acquired Dyncorp and PAE, both private defense contractors.¹²² The company mostly supports aviation — Amentum has a contract with CBP for “aircraft maintenance and logistics support services” that may surpass \$1.3 billion.¹²³ In summer 2024, Amentum hired SkySafe to provide drone technology for “real-time drone detection, tracking, and identification” along the border.¹²⁴

AM General, acquired by KPS Capital Partners in 2021,¹²⁵ produces the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (Humvee) in Indiana. Photos of CBP-outfitted Humvees date back to at least 2007,¹²⁶ and according to one source, CBP used around 100 Humvees to patrol the southern border as of 2015.¹²⁷

Conclusion



People migrating to the United States, whether seeking asylum or not, deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Unfortunately, allowing profit-driven private equity firms dominate an opaque market based on immigrant detention leads to less accountability for

any harm that occurs. Regulators, lawmakers, investors, taxpayers, and loved ones of those who have been detained should push for a system that prioritizes people over profits.

Appendix

ICE Detention Facility Contracts with Private Equity-Owned Companies

as of September 2024

58 out of 91 ICE facilities have contracts with one or more private equity-owned companies (63.7%). The table below lists the companies operating at each of the 58 facilities. For a full list of ICE facilities, see the agency website.¹²⁸

Facility ¹²⁹	City	State	Wellpath ¹³⁰	TKC ¹³¹	ICSolutions (TKC) ¹³²	Securus ¹³³	ViaPath / GTL ¹³⁴	CPC / InmateSales ¹³⁵
Abyon / Farmville Detention Center	Farmville	VA					X	
Adams County Correctional Center	New Orleans	LA	X				X	
Adelanto ICE Processing Center	Adelanto	CA	X				X	
Baker County Facility	MacClenny	FL	X	X		X		
Bluebonnet Detention Facility	Anson	TX			X		X	
Broward Transitional Center	Pompano Beach	FL		X			X	
Buffalo (Batavia) Service Processing Center	Batavia	NY		X				
Calhoun County Correctional Center	Battle Creek	MI		X	X			
Caroline Detention Facility	Bowling Green	VA		X			X	
Central Louisiana ICE Processing Center	Jena	LA					X	
Chase County Jail	Cottonwood Falls	KS						X
Chippewa County Correctional Facility	Sault Ste. Marie	MI		X				
Clay County Jail	Brazil	IN				X		
Clinton County Jail	Plattsburgh	NY		X				
Coastal Bend Detention Center	Robstown	TX					X	

Facility	City	State	Wellpath	TKC	ICSolutions (TKC)	Securus	ViaPath / GTL	CPC / InmateSales
CoreCivic Laredo Processing Center	Laredo	TX					X	
CoreCivic Webb County Detention Center	Laredo	TX					X	
Desert View Annex	Adelanto	CA	X					
Dodge Detention Facility	Juneau	WI			X			
East Hidalgo Detention Center	La Villa	TX					X	
Eden Detention Center	Eden	TX					X	
El Paso Service Processing Center	El Paso	TX					X	
El Valle Detention Center	Raymondville	TX					X	
Elmore County Detention Center	Mountain Home	ID		X				X
Eloy Detention Center	Eloy	AZ		X				
Folkston ICE Processing Center (Annex)	Folkston	GA		X			X	
Folkston ICE Processing Center (Main)	Folkston	GA	X				X	
Henderson Detention Center	Henderson	NV		X		X		
Houston Contract Detention Facility	Houston	TX					X	
Imperial Regional Detention Facility	Calexico	CA					X	
Joe Corley Detention Facility	Conroe	TX	X				X	
Kandiyohi County Jail	Willmar	MN				X		
Karnes County Immigration Processing Center	Karnes City	TX	X				X	
Krome North Service Processing Center	Miami	FL					X	

Facility	City	State	Wellpath	TKC	ICSolutions (TKC)	Securus	ViaPath / GTL	CPC / InmateSales
Mesa Verde ICE Processing Center	Bakersfield	CA	X					
Monroe County Jail	Monroe	MI	X		X			
Montgomery Processing Center	Conroe	TX		X			X	
Moshannon Valley Processing Center	Philipsburg	PA	X	X			X	
Nevada Southern Detention Center	Pahrump	NV		X			X	
Northwest ICE Processing Center	Tacoma	WA		X			X	
Orange County Jail	Goshen	NY		X			X	
Otay Mesa Detention Center	San Diego	CA		X			X	
Otero County Processing Center	Chaparral	NM					X	
Pennington County Jail	Rapid City	SD				X		
Phelps County Jail	Holdrege	NE		X				
Pike County Correctional Facility	Lords Valley	PA		X			X	
Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center	Pine Prairie	LA	X					
Plymouth County Correctional Facility	Plymouth	MA		X		X		
Polk County Jail	Des Moines	IA	X	X			X	
Port Isabel Service Processing Center	Los Fresnos	TX		X			X	
Prairieland Detention Facility	Alvarado	TX					X	
Rio Grande Processing Center	Laredo	TX					X	
Seneca County Jail	Tiffin	OH			X			
South Texas ICE Processing Center	Pearsall	TX					X	

Facility	City	State	Wellpath	TKC	ICSolutions (TKC)	Securus	ViaPath / GTL	CPC / InmateSales
St. Clair County Jail	Port Huron	MI				X		
Stewart Detention Center	Lumpkin	GA					X	
Strafford County Corrections	Dover	NH					X	
Wyatt Detention Facility	Central Falls	RI					X	

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