



STOP THE Uinta COUNTY IMMIGRATION PRISON

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As Wyoming business leaders, we stand in opposition to the proposed private immigration prison in Uinta County. Our reasons for opposing MTC are numerous and include the poor reputation of MTC in Wyoming, the harmful environments private prisons have created to ensure their existence, the increase in risk to which MTC will subject our small communities, and the deleterious impact an immigration prison will have on teachers, students and consumers Uinta County.

MTC's poor reputation is widely known and has been covered repeatedly in local newspapers. Already, MTC has a history of preying on vulnerable populations in Wyoming at their Job Corps center in Riverton. Good business owners understand that behavior like this is not just an isolated incident but evidence of toxic corporate culture, bad management, and long-term practices that lead employees to believe that unethical behavior is acceptable to their employer. When we apply for permits and licenses to operate our businesses in Wyoming, we provide evidence to show that we are a community asset. MTC will certainly not be a community asset.

As business owners, we also recognize that private prison companies like MTC create an extremely harmful self-sustaining feedback loop by supporting legislation that promotes higher incarceration rates, and through contracts with local governments that require taxpayer dollars to cover any fees if minimum "lock-up quotas" are not met. Private prison companies game the system so they cannot lose. They are not like other businesses in Wyoming such as clothing brands or hang-out spots: our businesses seek to encourage community pride, communication, participation, and opportunity, whereas MTC will seek to divide and imprison members of our community and our workforce.

In addition to prisons lowering property values over time, companies like MTC have decimated rural communities around the country first by siphoning workers away from businesses with deep community roots into menial jobs with high turnover rates. Then, after the closure of small, local businesses, private prison companies have abandoned rural communities entirely when changes in the White House have meant changes in immigration enforcement, their source of income. Bringing MTC to Wyoming means that we will further pin the economic future of our small towns on the whims of the federal government. These are not Wyoming values.

Finally, we as business owners acknowledge the changing demographics of Wyoming and the need to welcome all into our community. Data from the Wyoming Department of Education provides a key example of this: in Uinta County there was a marked decrease of close to 20% in student population between 1998 and 2017. However, there was an increase of over 150% in the number of Latino students over the same time. Wyoming is changing, and alienating people who have come to Wyoming to work, raise their families and go to school would result in a steep loss of school funding for the area and could mean layoffs for over 100 teachers. An immigration prison in the area could destroy the trust of Wyoming's newest residents. What would the loss of this consumer confidence do to Wyoming? What would the loss of over 100 stable, meaningful, good paying jobs do to Uinta County?

We as Wyoming business owners stand united in saying no to the private immigration prison, not only for ourselves but for those who worked hard and sacrificed to raise families and start businesses in Wyoming. The ones who cannot speak out due to fear, fear of losing everything. We in Wyoming don't believe hard working families should have to go through that.

We call on all of Wyoming to join us and say no to the Uinta County private immigration prison.

Signed:

Signature

Printed Name

Organization

Contact Email