



United States Senate

January 31, 2020

Mr. Matthew T. Albence
Acting Director
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Washington, DC 20536-5003

Dear Acting Director Albence,

I write to express my concern over the National Detention Standards (NDS) that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) recently issued. Given the number of deaths in ICE custody and widespread reports of poor conditions in ICE facilities, detention standards must be improved. I therefore ask that you suspend the revised standards and seek further input from qualified experts on how they can be improved.

The revised detention standards weaken the quality of care for immigrants in ICE custody. For example, these new standards allow ICE to use "hog-tying, fetal restraints, [and] tight restraints" when detaining immigrants. They also eliminate standards for basic necessities and allow ICE more discretion to place detainees in solitary confinement.

ICE facilities were already failing to meet existing standards. On September 27, 2018, the Inspector General found egregious violations of detention standards in facilities, including one in California where there were "nooses in detainee cells, overly restrictive segregation, inadequate medical care, unreported security incidents, and significant food safety issues."

In light of these issues, ICE must consult with medical and mental health experts, Congressional oversight committees, and advocates before finalizing and issuing new detention standards.

Thank you for prompt attention to this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator