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Civil Immigration Detention: When Civil Detention Turns Carceral

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Since the passage of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), there has been an extreme rise in the number of immigrants taken into U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, ICE took over 352,000 immigrants into custody pending removal proceedings or removal after a final order. The growing number of immigrant detainees led ICE to begin contracting with private, for-profit companies to house and care for ICE detainees. As of the end of 2016, 65 percent of all ICE detainees were housed in privately operated facilities.