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**Grace Meng**

**Congress of the United States**

**Sixth District, New York**

**August 18, 2016**

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The Honorable Jeh Johnson  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson:

Today, the Deputy Attorney General of the United States issued a memorandum to the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) directing it to end the use of privately operated prisons. As the administrator of the largest detention and supervised release program in the country (holding in custody almost twice the number of persons BOP currently holds – approximately 400,000 to 200,000, respectively), I request you issue a corresponding memorandum.

Immigration detention system beds are spread across more than 250 detention facilities nationwide. According to the Center for American Progress, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) "owns only 11 percent of the beds; 18 percent are housed in for-profit prisons under contract with ICE, and 24 percent are located in facilities owned by state and local governments that exclusively house immigrants for ICE....Some state and local facilities are also subcontracted with for-profit prison companies."<sup>1</sup> Allowing publicly-traded, and private, companies to profit from the detention of human beings is no morally different than allowing them to profit from state-mandated incarceration. America has allowed the proliferation of perverse detention and incarceration policy incentives for too long. The fact that the term "prison industry" even exists is itself a condemnation of our nation.

Please help cure this evil. Please end the DHS practice of for-profit detention.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

<sup>1</sup> *How For-Profit Companies Are Driving Immigration Detention Policies* Sharita Gruberg, December 2015:  
<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/17121556/ForProfitDetention-briefDec.pdf>