GEO GROUP BACKGROUND FACT SHEET

(Researched and written by Barbara Lacker-Ware)

Overview

The GEO Group is the largest private prison company in the world, providing privatized prisons, immigration detention, electronic monitoring and a number of other programs. It is based in Florida and has facilities in North America, Australia, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. The company, founded in 1984 by George Zoley, was originally called Wackenhut Corrections Corporation, then became G4S Secure Solutions and eventually changed to its current name. It has acquired Correctional Services Corporation, Cornell Corrections, BI Incorporated and Community Education Centers. BI Incorporated is a Colorado-based provider of electronic tracking equipment (largely ankle monitors) and other carceral services. BI contracts with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as well as various government and private correctional institutions for pre-trial and post-incarceration monitoring. The GEO Group also includes GEO Care, Inc. which provides mental health treatment, re-entry and residential services.

Other Facts

- Maintains:
  - 69 secure facilities with 74,746 beds in the US
  - 66 non-residential facilities (US)
  - 48 residential reentry facilities with 11,304 beds (US)
- 11 residential youth facilities with 1,235 beds (US)
- 6 international facilities with 7,527 beds

- Has incurred 34 workplace penalties since 2000, totaling fines of $7,097,437 for violations in the categories of: wages and hours, employment discrimination, employment screening, labor relations, environmental, workplace safety or health
- Accused of holding people who should have been released, not providing adequate medical care, detainees suffering food poisoning from being served rotten food, sexual assault, inadequate mental health care, several suicide attempts, maggots in the food, inadequate medical treatment, leading in some cases to death, mistreatment by GEO staff, and the overuse of solitary confinement.
- Several lawsuits allege “voluntary” forced-work programs that violate state minimum-wage laws and the Trafficking Victims Protection Act regarding detained undocumented immigrants in these facilities.

**States with the most GEO Group facilities and politicians in those states who received at least $10,000 from GEO Group:**

**Texas**
- 22 Facilities
- Detention/Prison Facilities: 15
● Residential Reentry: 6

● John Culberson, Republican, US House
  o House Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee member
  o Chair of House Appropriations Commerce, Justice and Science Subcommittee
  o Advocates for expansion of private prison industries and use of private prison contractors

● Henry Cuellar, Republican, US House
  o House Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee member
  o GEO is one of the largest employers in his district
  o Championed Operation Streamline policy to funnel immigrants into the federal criminal legal system

● John Carter, Republican, US House
  o Appropriations Committee, Chair of Commerce, Justice and Science Subcommittee

● John Cornyn, Republican, US Senate
  o Committee on the Judiciary, Chair of Sub-Committee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security
  o Sub-Committee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security member

● Henry Bonilla, Republican, US House
  o After leaving Congress, became a lobbyist and member of Board of Directors of BCFS, which operates several detention centers for children, including a tent city outside of El Paso.
Florida

- 6 Detention/Prison Facilities
- Marco Rubio, Republican, US Senate
  - Highest recipient of funds from GEO Group, starting when he was speaker of state senate
  - Former chief of staff, Cesar Conda, is a founding principal of Navigators Global, which has lobbied extensively for the GEO Group and BI Incorporated
  - GEO founder and chief executive has personally donated more than $10,000 to him
• Rick Scott, Republican, Former Governor & current US Senator
  ○ Has made privatizing Florida's jails and prisons a priority of his administration
  ○ Received donations from GEO founder George Zoley, some of which went to redecorate Scott's living quarters in the governor's mansion
  ○ GEO made illegal contributions to Scott’s campaign for senator

• Connie Mack, Republican, US House
  ○ After leaving office, formed a lobbying firm that represents GEO Group

• Carlos Curbelo, Republican, US House
  ○ Hosted an immigration panel discussion sponsored by Libre by Nexus, a bail bond company that has been accused of exploiting immigrants trapped in the deportation system
  ○ Has supported measures to increase funding for border security and crack down on undocumented immigrants

Louisiana
• 9 Facilities
  ○ Detention/Prison Facilities: 4
  ○ Non-Residential Reentry: 5

• David Vitter, Republican, US Senate
  ○ Voted against sanctuary cities legislation

California
• 37 Facilities
  ○ Detention/Prison Facilities: 10
  ○ Residential Reentry: 5
  ○ Non-Residential Reentry: 22

• Kevin McCarthy, Republican, US Senate

Pennsylvania
19 Facilities
  ○ Detention/Prison Facilities: 2
  ○ Residential Reentry: 3
  ○ Non-Residential Reentry: 9
  ○ Youth Services: 3
  ○ Youth Non-Residential: 2

Pat Toomey, Republican, US Senate

Colorado

7 Facilities
  ○ Detention/Prison Facilities: 1
  ○ Residential Reentry: 6

Mike Coffman, Republican, US House

New Jersey

8 Facilities
  ○ Residential Reentry: 3
  ○ Non-Residential Reentry: 5

Illinois

8 Facilities
  ○ Non-Residential Reentry: 6
  ○ Youth Services: 2

Contributions by GEO Group to US Congress from 2004 to 2018:

2004:
  ○ Democrats - $15,000
  ○ Republicans - $52,500

2010
- Democrats - $41,950
- Republicans - $45,000

- 2016
  - Democrats - $35,940
  - Republicans - $252,405