

Representative:

My name is Frank Pagurko, and I write to you on behalf of the Rio Grande Foundation, an economic policy think tank based in Albuquerque. We work to promote the interests of the people of New Mexico through free market policy.

In the interests of New Mexico's residents and the state's economic health, I strongly urge you to **vote NO** on HB 352, the "Private Detention Facility Moratorium Act." While the abolition of contractor-operated prisons has become a popular cause across the country, it is fundamentally misinformed. Contractor-operated prisons are *not* less humane than public prisons, nor are they free to operate without any oversight. They are less expensive to the state than public prisons but can produce better outcomes. The New Mexico Men's and Women's Recovery Academies near Albuquerque, for example, are managed by the GEO Group, a prison contractor. The programming in these academies is modeled after facilities that in other states have produced a **30% lower** recidivism rate than systems without that programming. This lower recidivism rate means lower costs to the state and better outcomes for New Mexico communities.

Specific issues with how contractor-operated prisons are run in New Mexico can be addressed by the legislature through contract negotiation and oversight, rather than through simply banning a system that has clearly demonstrated the potential to improve our criminal justice outcomes. For a better future for our state, please vote no on HB 352. Thank you.



Frank Pagurko III