

Why hasn't the federal government incorporated a community investment strategy?

In the late 1990's, the [Vera Institute for Justice](#) partnered with the INS (former ICE) to run a pilot community-based alternative to detention. Their pilot found that 93% of asylum seekers appeared for their hearings and 94% of people with past criminal convictions showed up for their hearings.

Unfortunately, when the INS issued an RFP for a federally-funded alternative to detention, it awarded the contract to a private prison corporation.

Private prison corporations, such as GEO Group and CCA/CoreCIVIC, have not only hijacked the term “alternatives to detention,” they have created a system to ensure their own profits whether or not an immigrant is physically confined. Since the 1990s, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has followed in the footsteps of its predecessor agency and poured millions of taxpayer dollars into two forms of “alternatives to detention” administered by private prison companies.

These programs are *not* alternatives to detention, but rather, alternative *forms* of detention:

Intensive Supervision Appearance Program (ISAP): ISAP is administered by Behavioral Interventions, a subsidiary of the private prison corporation GEO Group. It relies on the use of electronic ankle monitors, biometric voice recognition software, unannounced home visits, employer verification, and in-person reporting to supervise participants. GEO Group generates approximately \$47 million in annualized revenues from ISAP. This is not a community investment strategy, but rather, an alternative form of detention because it privileges surveillance over support.

Family Case Management Program: The Family Case Management Program was supposedly going to be a true community-run “alternative to detention” that would provide social, medical, and legal services to 1,500 mothers and children who would otherwise be detained. However, ICE awarded the \$11 million program contract to GEO Care, another subsidiary of GEO Group. GEO Group is concerned first and foremost with “[yield\[ing\] attractive profit margins](#),” not caring for those released into its program.

For more information, check out our timeline on the history of immigration detention.
www.freedomforimmigrants.org/detention-timeline