



REPRESENTATIVE
BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

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Watson Coleman Introduces the End For-Profit Prisons Act of 2016

Watson Coleman: "Our criminal justice system should be about justice, not profit."

Washington, DC (September 22, 2016) — Today, Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12) announced the introduction of the End For-Profit Prisons Act of 2016, legislation that would require the Bureau of Prisons and U.S. Marshals Service to end its contracts with for-profit confinement facilities, and make critical changes to the re-entry process for individuals who have been released from federal prisons.

"Our prison system's only purpose should be to reeducate and retrain the individuals who have made mistakes, and are serving time for them," said Watson Coleman. "No one should profit from our prison system, or any other element of our justice system. The primary goal of any for-profit industry is to maximize revenue and minimize any cost — and in a prison, that means few if any amenities for inmates, crowding and minimal space, and little focus on the needs and rehabilitation of that population."

While President Obama's administration recently announced plans to phase out the use of for-profit prisons, the End For-Profit Prisons Act would codify that decision and ensure we never waste taxpayer dollars on for-profit prisons again. Specifically, Watson Coleman's legislation would:

- Prohibit the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and the United States Marshals Service from contracting with for-profit parties for core correctional services within six years of enactment;
- Prohibit BOP contracts with for-profit community confinement facilities within eight years of enactment;
- Require the BOP to study the decrease in prison population on an ongoing basis and include information about race, gender, age, nature of offense, nationality, and location of the person's confinement;

- Require the US Marshals to conduct annual, thorough inspections of the confinement facilities they use to ensure that Constitutional and statutory standards are met;
- Require that each individual released from federal prison, including those located in community confinement facilities, be provided counseling and assistance with applications for Medicaid, Social Security, and nutritional program benefits;
- Ensure released individuals receive a detailed record of their participation in employment, educational, and treatment programs completed while incarcerated to assist in job placement and;
- Require that individuals receive information about outstanding fines, restitution, and other penalties in connection with their incarceration at release to prevent re-incarceration for unpaid penalties.

An [August 2016 report from the Office of the Inspector General](#) at the Department of Justice found more safety and security incidents per capita at for-profit prisons contracted by BOP than comparable BOP facilities, in addition to inappropriate use of Special Housing Units — solitary confinement intended for disciplinary or administrative separation that frequently leads to emotional and psychological distress — as extra space until beds in general population housing became available.

To read the text of the bill, [click here](#).

Sincerely,

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