



April 28, 2020

Beth Werlin
Executive Director
American Immigration Council
1331 G Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Werlin, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Goehring and partners,

Thank you for your letter. I agree that we all have an obligation to do as much as possible to keep people safe and healthy in response to the impacts of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). To that end, I have taken numerous steps, including issuing directives and guidelines to counties, municipalities, law enforcement agencies, and detention centers to limit and prevent the spread of COVID-19 among our detained populations. And while the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility is a federal facility, I encourage that agency to follow those same guidelines, including following federal, state, and local directives on social distancing and safely reducing the population of those being held, especially those being held on civil violations. I am encouraged by the recent federal court decision in California ordering ICE to identify and track detained individuals at elevated risk of complications from COVID-19, and to consider releasing those detainees regardless of their legal status.

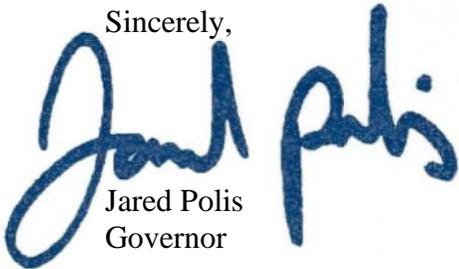
I strongly urge the federal government to release those who are being held in custody for civil, not criminal, reasons. I also strongly encourage ICE to ensure that the facility in Aurora is keeping individuals in custody and federal employees safe by following guidelines and best practices, and implement processes and procedures that mitigate the likelihood of additional individuals contracting COVID-19. Just as our state and local facilities are taking pains to safely reduce their populations, ICE should release anyone being held in civil detention without a corresponding criminal charge. There is little merit in keeping individuals who are held on civil detainers in an environment where COVID-19 can easily spread, and there is much to be gained by responsibly releasing individuals so that their health and wellness is maintained, and preventing further impacts on our already-strained local health care facilities.

It is also of critical importance that the federal government provides updated data regularly, including infection rates among both employees and those in detention, as that data is crucial to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in the community. We are working with Representative Jason Crow's office to ensure we have the information we need, and we are thankful for his transparency project that made public health data available even before the current outbreak. Additionally, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment works closely with Tri-County Health, which is a key partner to Congressman Crow's office.

Finally, I strongly encourage Congress and the President to address this issue promptly by taking immediate action to ensure both privately- and government-run ICE facilities are doing everything

they can to limit potential outbreaks in those facilities Together, I know we are committed to preventing the spread of COVID-19 as much as possible within our borders. We appreciate your continued service to Colorado and thank you.

Sincerely,



Jared Polis
Governor

CC: The Honorable Michael Bennett, United States Senator
The Honorable Cory Gardner, United States Senator
The Honorable Jason Crow, Member of Congress
The Honorable Dianna DeGette, Member of Congress
The Honorable Doug Lamborn, Member of Congress
The Honorable Ken Buck, Member of Congress
The Honorable, Member of Congress
The Honorable Joe Neguse, Member of Congress
The Honorable Scott Tipton, Member of Congress
Phil Weiser, Attorney General, Colorado
John Fabbriatore, Deputy Field Office Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

CC: Letter Signatories

Beth Werlin, Executive Director, American Immigration Council
Ben Johnson, Executive Director, American Immigration Lawyers Association
Mekela Goehring, Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Janine Young, MD, FAAP Associate Professor, University of Colorado School of Medicine
Carlos Franco-Paredes MD, MPH Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Colorado
Matthew Wynia, MD, MPH, FACP Professor of Medicine and Public Health Director, University of Colorado

Meghan Treitz, MD, FAAP President, American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado
Chapter Gretchen Heinrichs, MD Associate Professor, University of Colorado School of
Medicine

Jaime Moo-Young, MD Assistant Professor, University of Colorado School of Medicine
Megan Robins, Linkage and Retention in Care Coordinator, UC Health

Trina Seefeldt, PhD Clinical Instructor, University of Colorado School of Medicine

Katherine Anderson, MD FAAFP Assistant Professor, University of Colorado School of
Medicine Lilia Cervantes, MD Associate Professor University of Colorado School of
Medicine

Mark Earnest, MD, PhD Professor of Medicine, University of Colorado School of
Medicine