



**One Hundred Fourteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515**

August 19, 2016

The Honorable John Roth  
Inspector General  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Inspector General Roth:

On August 11, 2016, the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Inspector General (OIG) released a report, “Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons’ (BOP) Monitoring of Contract Prisons”.<sup>1</sup> The OIG found that contract prisons incurred more safety and security incidents per capita than comparable BOP institutions. Additionally, the OIG found the BOP needs to improve the way it monitors contract prisons. The findings of the OIG report prompted the DOJ to terminate or decline to renew its contracts with privately operated prisons. According to Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates, “They [private prisons] simply do not provide the same level of correctional services, programs, and resources; they do not save substantially on costs; and as noted in a recent report by the Department’s Office of Inspector General, they do not maintain the same level of safety and security.”<sup>2</sup>

The prisons assessed by the DOJ OIG are operated by three private corporations: Corrections Corporation of America (CCA); the GEO Group, Inc. (GEO); and Management and Training Corporation (MTC).<sup>3</sup> These three corporations hold contracts with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)—the private prison industry’s largest client. As you know, DHS relies on privately operated prisons, including the three corporations cited by the DOJ OIG report, to detain immigrants. Last year, approximately 62 percent of immigration detention beds were operated by private prisons.<sup>4</sup> DHS’ immigration detention program detains approximately 400,000 people each year.<sup>5</sup> Given the DOJ OIG’s findings, and DHS’ recent decision to enter

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Inspector General, United States Department of Justice. 16-06. August 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Internal Memorandum, Department of Justice. August 18, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> DOJ OIG 16-06.

<sup>4</sup> Id.

<sup>5</sup> Sharita Gruberg, “How For-Profit Companies Are Driving Immigration Policies.” December 18, 2015.

into a no bid, four year, one billion dollar contract with Corrections Corporation of America, it is imperative that you immediately initiate a review to determine whether DHS should reduce its dependence on private prisons. In light of the recent findings about the significant safety, security and cost issues associated with utilizing these private prisons, it is necessary for DHS to know whether or not these large-scale contractual agreements are cost effective and they maintain security and safety.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Hope Goins, Chief Counsel for Oversight at [hope.goins@mail.house.gov](mailto:hope.goins@mail.house.gov) or 202-226-2616.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson  
Ranking Member