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**Despite Threats and Retaliation, Hunger Strikers Continue Protest
*ICE Ignores Demands for Improved Conditions***

Tacoma, WA/The Dalles, OR - Immigrants held at ICE facilities in two states - the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC), run by GEO Group, and NORCOR, a rural public jail - continued their hunger strike today, despite growing weakness from lack of food. The exponential growth of immigration detention has led ICE to contract the function of detaining immigrants out to both private prison companies and to county governments, with both treating immigrants as a source of profit. ICE has been using NORCOR as 'overflow' detention space for immigrants held at NWDC, and is regularly transferring people back and forth from the NWDC to NORCOR. People held at NORCOR have limited access to lawyers and to the legal documents they need to fight and win their deportation cases. They are often transferred back to NWDC only for their hearings, then shipped back to NORCOR, where they face terrible conditions. Jessica Campbell of the Rural Organizing Project affirmed, "No one deserves to endure the conditions at NORCOR – neither the immigrants ICE is paying to house there, nor the people of Oregon who end up there as part of criminal processes. It's unsafe for everyone." The strike began on April 10th, when 750 people at the NWDC began refusing meals. The protest spread to NORCOR this past weekend. Marú Mora Villalpando of NWDC Resistance confirmed, "It's very clear from our contact with people inside the facilities and with family members of those detained that the hunger strike continues in both Oregon and Washington State." She continued, "The question for us is, how will ICE assure that the abuses that these whistle-blowing hunger strikers have brought to light are addressed?"

From the beginning of the protest, instead of using the strike as an opportunity to look into the serious concerns raised by the hunger strikers, ICE and GEO have both denied the strike is occurring and retaliated against strikers. Hunger strikers have been transferred to NORCOR in retaliation for their participation. One person who refused transfer to NORCOR was put in solitary confinement. Just this week, hunger striking women have been threatened with forced feeding – a practice that is recognized under international law to be torture. In an attempt to break their spirit, hunger strikers have been told the strike has been ineffective and that the public is ignoring it. Hunger striker demands terrible conditions inside detention center be addressed- including the poor quality of the food, the \$1 a day pay, and the lack of medical care. They also call for more expedited court proceedings and the end of transfers between detention facilities. Hunger strikers consistently communicate, "We are doing this for our families." Despite their incredibly oppressive conditions, locked away and facing deportation in an immigration prison in the middle of an industrial zone and in a rural county jail, hunger strikers have acted collectively and brought national attention to the terrible conditions they face and to the ongoing crisis of deportations, conditions the U.S. government must address.

For live updates, visit <https://www.facebook.com/NWDCResistance/>.

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NWDC Resistance is a volunteer community group that emerged to fight deportations in 2014 at the now-infamous Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA as part of the #Not1More campaign, and supported people detained who organized hunger strikes asking for a halt to all deportations and better treatment and conditions.

Rural Organizing Project (ROP) is a statewide network of 60 locally-based groups in rural and small town Oregon that work to promote human dignity: the belief in the equal worth of all people, the need for equal access to justice, and the right to self-determination. ROP has connected leaders and groups through collective action for inclusive democracy and shared organizing for racial, economic, and gender justice since 1992.