

NORCOR Budgets for Increase in ICE Revenue

Under the Trump Administration, immigration policy has been dramatically altered. While the Obama Administration was known for an unprecedented level of deportations -President Obama in fact earned the title of “Deporter and Chief” - the Trump Administration plans to go further, pushing for a “no limits immigration enforcement strategy.”¹ One outcome of this new aggressive strategy will be the increased demand for detention space.

The state of Oregon does not have immigration detention facilities within the state, the closest immigration detention center is the Tacoma Northwest Detention Center in Washington state. However, Northern Oregon Regional Correctional Facilities (NORCOR) in The Dalles has a long standing intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA) with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).² NORCOR was opened in 1999 to serve four member counties: Wasco, Hood River Sherman, and Gilliam.³ Each county contributes to the primary operating fund for the jail at 50 percent, 40 percent, 5 percent, and 5 percent, respectively.

ICE’s use of NORCOR has been relatively limited over the years, however given the policy shift on the national level, local jurisdictions are reacting dramatically. On March 16, the NORCOR Board proposed a 438 percent increase to their Federal Inmate Housing ICE budget for the coming year.⁴ This increase is not in line with the state of Oregon’s declaration to be an inclusive state, furthermore there are questions as to whether the IGSA conflicts with the 30 year old Oregon Revised Statute 181A.820.

Revenue Adult Department : Federal Inmate Housing ICE

2014-2015 YTD Actual	2015-2016 YTD Actual	2016-2017 YTD Actual	2016-2017 YTD Budget	2017-2018 YTD Budget
201,148	237,192	579,406	190,000	1,022,800

While NORCOR budgeted for \$190,000 in revenue from ICE in 2016, they in fact received approximately three times more. Their initial budget was in fact a 20 percent reduction from the previous year’s actual revenue. NORCOR has struggled in the past to find ways in which to sustainably fund the jail.⁵ NORCOR board members include county commissioners from each of the member counties and there has been some disagreement amongst the counties on the fairness of the current funding formula. It would appear the 2017 budget proposal will greatly reduce the fiscal pressure on the four counties.

Given the obvious conflict this budget presents I believe the Governor should make a statement addressing the issue. The NORCOR budget is not in line with Governor Brown’s recent executive order to increase the reach of the 30 year old sanctuary policy. In the short term a statement from the executive of the state will apply significant pressure as well as shed light on this extreme and concerning policy shift.

¹ Innovation Law Lab, Causa, Lewis & Clark Law School. (March 2017). Executive Experimentation: Oregon’s Response to Ordering Constitutionally-Risky Immigration Action. Event hosted at Lewis & Clark College.

² TRAC Immigration. Detainees Leaving ICE Detention from the Northern Oregon Correctional Facility Also Known As Norcor: The Dalles, Oregon. Retrieved from <http://trac.syr.edu/immigration/detention/201509/NORCOOR/exit/>

³ Revised Budget Message FY 2017/18 <http://www.norcor.co/documents/files/Revised%20Budget%20Message%20FY%202017-2018.pdf>

⁴ Budget Report FY 2017-2018 <http://www.norcor.co/documents/files/Budget%20Report%20FY%202017-2018.pdf>

⁵ Hood River News. (November 2012) County approves new NORCOR funding model: Mediated agreement will save HR County \$200,000 per year. Retrieved from <http://www.hoodrivernews.com/news/2012/nov/23/county-approves-new-norcor-funding-model/>