



To Embrace and Uphold
America's Tradition
as a Nation of Immigrants

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Legislation to Regulate Immigration Detention System Introduced [Share This](#)

BILLS WILL PROTECT U.S. CITIZENS FROM UNLAWFUL DETENTION AND ENSURE DUE PROCESS RIGHTS TO DETAINEES

Washington, DC – Today in the Senate, two important pieces of legislation seeking to fix our broken immigration detention system were introduced: the “Protect Citizens and Residents from Unlawful Detention Act” sponsored by Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Edward Kennedy (D-MA), and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and the “Strong STANDARDS Act (Safe Treatment, Avoiding Needless Deaths, and Abuse Reduction in the Detention System)” sponsored by Senators Menendez and Gillibrand. The legislation would address some of the concerns raised by recent [news articles](#) and [reports](#), over the deteriorating conditions and lack of due process protections for immigrants in detention. The following is a statement by Douglas Rivlin, Communications Director of the National Immigration Forum, a non-partisan, non-profit pro-immigrant advocacy organization in Washington.

The dismal state of our immigration detention system makes it clear that the time is now for Congressional action to address our failing immigration system. Hundreds of thousands of people including women, children, asylum seekers – and even some [U.S. citizens](#) who have been mistakenly identified – are caught in a system in crisis. The Department of Homeland Security estimates it will detain over 440,000 individuals this year in a detention system plagued by deplorable conditions and rampant abuse. This poorly run detention complex exists at the [expense](#) of detainees’ rights and U.S. taxpayers’ dollars.

We praise Senators Menendez, Gillibrand and Kennedy along with Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, who is fighting for similar legislation in the House. Their leadership is critical to winning reforms that protect the fundamental rights of detainees and ensure that American values of fairness, transparency and due process are upheld.

However, as long as we have a deficient immigration system the detention system will continue to be overburdened. Unless we pass comprehensive immigration reform, we will continue to have a system divorced from reality, which does not provide sufficient legal channels for immigrants to use or mechanisms for immigrants already in the country to get legalized. It is important and urgent that Congress implements workable solutions that will place our immigration system back on a legal footing and restore basic fairness and humanity to our cruel, costly, and irrational detention system.

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