

“As a longtime member of Washington CAN I firmly support our organization’s efforts to fight for racial and social justice. In Washington State we have witnessed the consequences of our broken immigration system: raids at apartment complexes, the snatching of people from parking lots, and raids at job sites where the majority of employees are low-income people of color. These actions are separating families, leaving children without their parents, creating fear in our communities and violating basic human rights.

Washington CAN has joined forces with other community organizations in our state to not only bring to light these abuses but also to empower those targeted by Immigration and Custom Enforcement (also known as ICE) to enforce their rights and to report abuses and raids.

We’ve set up a toll-free number so that people witnessing a raid can call to report it. Our trained volunteers will investigate and document those raids. The toll-free number will also help relatives of those detained by providing them with basic information about the detention center, the detention process, the rights of people in detention, and resources to find legal advice.

We will be monitoring ICE and their use of private companies like the GEO Group, Inc. which runs the Northwest Detention Center and is making a tidy profit off of our broken immigration system. We will be reporting what we’ve learned about their actions to the mainstream media to educate the larger community. We will also be taking this information to our representatives in Congress in Washington, DC, as proof of a broken system that needs to be **fixed immediately**, not two or more years down the road!

No more violations to human rights, no more terrorizing communities of color, and no more profiteering at the expense of the oppressed groups in our country!

It is important for all of us to stand together, citizens, legal residents and people without documents – in recognition of our common struggle for human rights and human dignity. **We have to stand together** and be proactive against these raids, and to let ICE know **we are watching them**, and **we will not be afraid of them anymore**.

In closing I would like to quote James Bryce: ‘Our country is not the only thing to which we owe our allegiance. It is also owed to justice and to humanity.’”

Sue Stauffer, July 13, 2007
At the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA

