

URGENT ACTION

MAURA IS FREE FROM IMMIGRATION DETENTION

Maura, a transgender woman originally from Nicaragua, has spent half her life living in the United States, where she sought safety after experiencing relentless gender-based violence while living in Mexico. After a legal incident, authorities detained and threatened to deport her. She spent over two years at an immigration detention facility in California, where she experienced abuse and a lack of adequate medical care. On 2 July 2021, immigration authorities released Maura.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Amnesty International worked with a coalition of organizations dedicated to immigration justice and LGBTI rights to leverage global pressure on authorities to release Maura.

There are many more transgender individuals like Maura who are unjustly locked up in US immigration detention and are experiencing inhumane treatment because of their gender identity. The United States of America has the largest immigration detention system in the world, with an average daily population of nearly 40,000 immigrants and asylum-seekers in over 200 immigration detention facilities as of early 2020. While detention levels dropped to historic lows at the end of 2020 and beginning of 2021 due to the immigration restrictions at the US southern border put into place under the pretext of COVID-19 and deportations, the number of people in immigration detention has now sharply risen under the Biden administration, from 13,860 in early February to 27,008 in early July – a 95 percent increase.

The vast majority of people in detention are Black and brown, and most detained people are held in privately operated prisons where financial incentives appear to dictate the quality of care they receive. Nearly all others are held in county jails that contract with the federal government. The largest private prison operators have seen their profits soar over a four-year period into the billions of dollars. Private or public, large numbers of facilities detaining immigrants have been linked to human rights violations and poor treatment, including unsafe and unsanitary conditions, assault and abuse, negligent medical care, and excessive use of solitary confinement. Without universal access to vaccines or adequate protective measures in detention, detained immigrants and asylum-seekers are in serious danger as they are forced to face ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks in detention facilities.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Maura (She, her)

THIS IS THE SECOND AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 067/21

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/4252/2021/en/>