

April 3, 2018
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Dear Mr President:

I am concerned about private prisons. As the US became the worlds most imprisoned society in the 1980s and prison became the biggest budget item for many states we began to use private prisons. Since then many studies and even more anecdotes have found serious problems with these institutions. Costs are hard to compare but private prisons tend to keep the younger, healthier prisoners and Mukherjee found them extending sentences by issuing infractions. What they do with the money is worse with a few executives making millions and some politicians benefiting (think of Judge Ciavarella convicted of sending innocent kids to a private prison for kickbacks) while staffing is kept low with short trainings, poor wages and high turnover as seen in a study from 2001, one by the DOJ in 2016 and just this week horrible testimony from a civil rights lawsuit in Mississippi. The predictable result is higher rates of assault between prisoners and guards, higher escape rates and more suspicious deaths.

Please assure me that you will ban private prisons.

I am very proud to be a US resident and a large part of that derives from our fair justice system.

Sincerely,
Eric Babson