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from the Illinois House of Representatives

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 21, 2019

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Cassidy Legislation to Ban For-Profit Immigration Detention Centers Passes Committee

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – State Rep. Kelly Cassidy, D-Chicago, advanced legislation to ban for-profit prisons today out of the House Labor and Commerce Committee, in an effort to block private immigration centers that have recently been approved in Illinois.

“We recently saw a resurgence of municipalities and local governments attempting to approve new for-profit and privately operated detention centers that would target immigrants,” Cassidy said. “Detention centers only confine those detained and cause more suffering to people who are going through one of the difficult times they will face in their life. The holding of a person, whether for a crime or for their immigration status, in a facility that will earn money for holding them is financially and morally irresponsible. For-profit detention centers focus on exactly the opposite of what we should be doing in our state, which is putting profits over the well-being, care, and basic rights of decency of people.”

Cassidy’s House Bill 2040 would prohibit the state or any unit of local government from operating private detention facilities, like those recently proposed to hold detained immigrants. Private, for-profit immigration centers have been attempted in four locations in Illinois. The legislation would also prohibit the entering of contracts, receiving payment or providing payment to a facility owned, managed or operated by a private company or person.

“Stopping these kinds of centers is about ensuring common dignity and humanity to people,” said state Rep. Elizabeth ‘Lisa’ Hernandez, D-Cicero. “There is no evidence that these types of facilities save any money, and often provide no oversight or specialized care to those held there. This bill is a major step in the right direction when it comes to protecting immigrants and providing the proper care that every person deserves.”

The legislation represents initiatives of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. It passed out of the House Labor and Commerce Committee Wednesday and awaits approval from the House as a whole.