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from the Illinois General Assembly

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 28, 2020

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Representative Cassidy's Statement on ICE Continuing Plans to Open For-Profit Detention Center Violating State Law

CHICAGO – In spite of the Illinois General Assembly voting overwhelmingly to affirm the state's long held policy of prohibition of for profit prisons last year, it would appear that ICE and the Village of Dwight intend to continue the effort to build a for profit ICE Detention Center in Illinois. The state has had a ban on privately run, for-profit prisons for decades, but legislation passed last year clarified that ban should also apply to non-criminal settings such as ICE detention centers. The bill ([HB2040](#)) passed both chambers last May with significant bipartisan support and was signed by the Governor on June 21, 2019. A [recent news report](#) revealed that ICE has continued to pursue the location in Dwight, submitting a letter requesting an environmental site review on the proposed location.

"I sponsored this bill knowing the realities of for profit prisons and knowing that the mistreatment we've seen in these facilities across the country has no place in our state. As we see reports from across the country of detainees contracting COVID-19 at an alarming rate in ICE detention centers, federal agents including ICE acting outside the law to 'disappear' protestors, and this administration's ongoing war against immigrants, this appears to be yet one more example of this administration pursuing their hateful agenda regardless of legal standing," said Rep. Kelly Cassidy, chief House sponsor of HB2040.

Local governments around the country have found that the promises made by for profit prison developers rarely come to fruition. Once the prison is built and the dangerous working conditions, low pay, and lack of benefits become the reality, it is often too late to go back. Representative Cassidy previously argued against the closure of Dwight Women's prison, noting the town's unique wrap around support for the women incarcerated there and has long advocated for more thoughtful economic development for towns impacted by closures of state facilities or other economic disasters. The state must do more to assist towns like Dwight when significant economic losses hit.

"The Village of Dwight should acknowledge the reality that the state has made our policy abundantly clear on the question of whether someone should profit off of putting humans in cages with the passage of HB2040 and abandon this wrongheaded approach to economic development not only is a flagrant violation of state law, but putting their residents at significant