

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MOURNING THE DEATH OF JAMES HILL FROM COVID CONTRACTED WHILE DETAINED BY ICE AT ICA-FARMVILLE IN VIRGINIA

Farmville, Virginia. August 8, 2020 - We mourn the loss of James Hill, a [72-year-old man who died of COVID-19](#) after contracting the disease while detained at the Farmville detention center, operated by the private prison company Immigration Centers of America (ICA). Despite being high-risk of death from COVID-19 due to his age, James Hill had been detained at ICA-Farmville between April and July of this year, as the global pandemic spread like wildfire in ICE facilities across the country. He was supposed to return home to Canada on July 9th, but fell ill and was hospitalized days before his flight. On Wednesday night, he lost his fight against COVID and became the [17th person to die in ICE custody](#) this fiscal year.

James Hill's death was entirely preventable. He, along with nearly 90% of the detained population at Farmville, contracted COVID after ICE transferred 74 people from Florida and Arizona into ICA-Farmville in June. 51 of those 74 people later tested positive for COVID-19, and, shortly after the transfer, the entire facility became overwhelmed with COVID. Mr. Hill also suffered aggravated COVID symptoms after [ICA-Farmville guards used pepper spray](#) against people protesting the facility's abysmal response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

We join the long-standing [demands](#) of those detained at ICA-Farmville for their release in response to ICE and ICA-Farmville's continued and systematic medical neglect. It is too late to save Mr. Hill's life, but we can still ensure that we do not senselessly lose another. Farmville should be shut down for good, and ICE should cease its blind reliance on the incarceration of immigrants.

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**La ColectiVA** is an inclusive collaborative led by gente Latinx who are committed to upholding social justice and equity.

**Sanctuary DMV** is an all-volunteer solidarity group resisting harmful policies & practices targeting migrants in DC, Maryland & Virginia.

The **National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG)** is a national non-profit organization that litigates, advocates, and provides technical assistance and support to community-based immigrant organizations, legal practitioners, and all advocates working to advance the rights of noncitizens.

**DC IWOC** is DC's very own Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee. DC IWOC resists the State through an abolitionist, inside-outside network, on occupied Piscataway, Manahoac, Appamattuck, Chesapeake and Tutelo lands. #FreeThemAll

**Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Northern Virginia** is a chapter of a national network of groups and individuals organizing white people for racial justice.

The **Legal Aid Justice Center** partners with communities and clients to achieve justice by dismantling systems that create and perpetuate poverty. Justice means racial justice, social justice, and economic justice.

**Justice for Muslims Collective** works to dismantle institutional and structural Islamophobia through raising political consciousness and shifting narratives, community empowerment, organizing and healing, and building alliances across movements with a focus on the greater Washington region.

**ICE Out of DC** is an immigrant-led coalition focused on ending the District's criminalization of immigrants and collaboration with ICE.

**Congregation Action Network** is an organizing network of congregations in the DC/MD/VA region that provide support and solidarity to neighbors, friends, and family who fear being detained, deported or profiled.

**Doctors for Camp Closure** is an organization of physicians and healthcare workers seeking to end the inhumane treatment and detention of those coming to our borders, asking for our help.

The **Maryland Legislative Coalition** is a partnership of individuals and members of grassroots groups in every legislative district across the state who are laser focused on state-level legislation. We support positive legislation that makes the lives of all Marylanders better.

**Sanctuary Streets Baltimore** stands in solidarity with migrants/asylum seekers/immigrants by providing logistical and emotional support to those targeted by inhumane immigration policies.

**Takoma Park Mobilization's Equal Justice Committee (TPM Equal Justice)** engages in local, state, and federal policy advocacy on a range of issues related to social justice; areas of focus have included immigration, racial equity, criminal justice and policing reform, homelessness, and religious intolerance.

The **LGBTQ Dignity Project** is an organization striving to remove harmful ideologies of minorities in the LGBTQ community and advocates for pro-LGBTQ Legislation.

**PG Change Makers** are a coalition of activists in Prince George's County dedicated to racial justice, equity, and empowerment.

***Refugee and Immigration Ministries*** equips Disciples to respond to Jesus' call to welcome the stranger through refugee resettlement, ministering with immigrants, and advocacy.

***National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd*** educates and develops strategies to address social justice issues and advocates for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people.