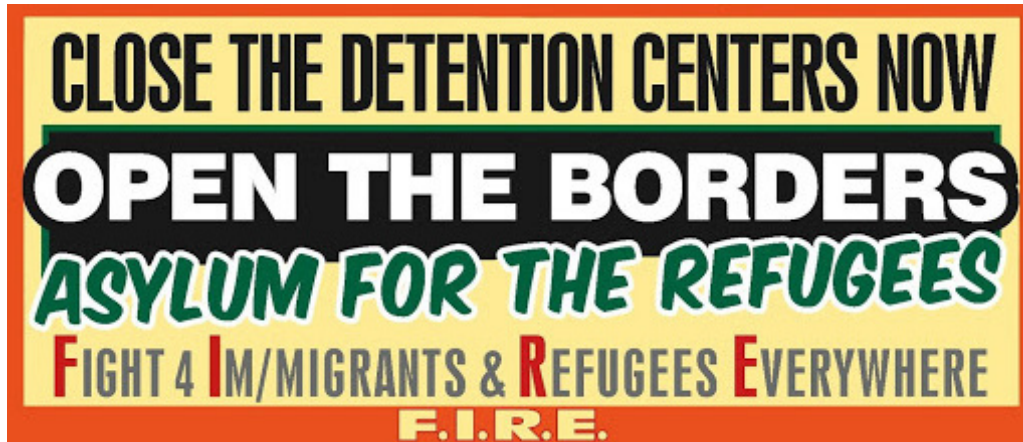


# **FIRE STATEMENT ON THE MIGRANT ABUSE AT IRWIN DETENTION CENTER, GEORGIA - DAWN WOOTEN IS A HERO!**



FIRE (Fight for Im/migrant & Refugees Everywhere) commends the heroic action of Dawn Wooten, a licensed practical nurse who worked at the Irwin County ICE (Immigration & Customs Enforcement) Detention Center for exposing forced sterilizations in an immigration detention center. Ms. Wooten, who is African American, took a courageous stand when she blew the whistle on abuse she witnessed against migrants at this facility. Her bold actions exemplify Black & Brown unity-as most migrants are from Central America and demonstrates in practice that there are no borders in the workers struggle. As a result of her heroic action, legal groups in conjunction with many advocacy groups filed a “whistleblower complaint” on her behalf in mid-September. The complaint documents what can only be described as Nazi-like medical practices and the kind of genocidal atrocities that have been practiced for decades on Black, Brown, Indigenous and Puerto Rican women in particular. Ms. Wooten witnessed an exorbitant rate of hysterectomies performed on immigrant women while working at the center operated by LaSalle Corrections, a private prison company. According to Law&Crime publication multiple women told one of the advocacy groups, Project South that there was an “inordinate rate at which women in ICDC were subjected to hysterectomies.” In addition, “many of the immigrant women who underwent the procedure were reportedly confused when asked to explain why they had surgery, with one detainee likening their treatment to prisoners in concentration camps.” The doctor who carried out these atrocities has not been jailed or disbarred. This should be the next step in the fight for justice. The hysterectomies were so prevalent that the staff derided him as the “uterus collector.” One woman told Project South she was not properly anesthetized. Women who complained were put into isolation. Wooten told the press she was demoted and reprimanded when she spoke out.

## **NO TO FORCED STERILIZATIONS**

This heinous abuse is just the tip of the iceberg of what is happening behind closed jail doors. For example, advocates exposed the fact that an industrial disinfectant HDQ Neutral, which contains hazardous chemicals, was used at the Adelanto Immigrant Detention Facility, run by the notorious GEO Group. Migrants who are fleeing violent situations at home, instability created by US imperialist interventions, still wait in difficult conditions at the US/Texas border. Children taken by the Trump administration are still not all reunited with their families. In fact some were found by the Dept of Health & Human Services to have been placed in the custody of human traffickers! (NY Times Jan. 2016)

## **SOLIDARITY IS THE SOLUTION**

The solution to these horrific conditions is to continue to build a united movement for workers’ rights, no matter where we are born. The fight against abuses at migrant detention centers is the same fight to close all prisons and release all detainees, especially because of COVID-19. Wall Street and the Pentagon created the conditions that force workers to flee their countries. It is these criminals who should be punished, not migrants. Only solidarity between those behind the walls and those in the streets can stop these abuses.

**To contact FIRE and to help organize solidarity and fight for migrants around the world, contact us: [fightformigrants.org](http://fightformigrants.org) or email us at: [info@fightformigrants.org](mailto:info@fightformigrants.org)**