

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 12, 2021

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

As the U.S. Representative for the 34th Congressional District of Texas, I write in support of Willacy County's request for an intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA) between the Willacy County-Public Facility Corporation and the United States Marshals Service (USMS) for the provision, receipt, and sharing of installation support services for the Willacy County Regional Detention Facility (WCRDF).

Located in Raymondville, Texas, WCRDF provides high-paying jobs to more than 200 full-time employees and generates more than \$400,000 a year in revenue for Willacy County. The facility provides housing for approximately 600 individuals and meets a vital need for USMS because of its proximity to two federal courts in Brownsville and McAllen. WCRDF's proximity to these federal courts ensures that individuals in the facility have full access to legal counsel, are able to attend all court appointments, and be safely transported to them. The loss of this facility would not only have a devastating impact to those detained there, but also have a crippling effect on the local economy.

WCRDF is accredited by the American Correctional Association and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care, and is certified by the Prison Rape Elimination Act. The facility meets all performance-based national detention standards and is equipped to support multiple individuals with varying risk levels. The facility has safely detained individuals with gang affiliations, drug cartel members, ex-law enforcement officers, and even a former Mexican Governor. WCRDF also has a medical team prepared to support individuals who have higher acuity chronic medical conditions and individuals who have chronic behavior issues; often USMS transfers individuals with health concerns to this facility.

I strongly support Willacy County's request for an intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA) which would allow the county to continue running the facility, and sub-contract any necessary operations to ensure quality standards continue to be met. Thank you for your consideration of their request, I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Filemon Vela
Member of Congress