

Prison Firm Donated to Trump's PAC After ICE Gave It \$165 Million a Year in Contracts

The GEO Group has profited from the administration's mass deportation campaign. A subsidiary donated more than \$1.4 million to the president's super PAC last month.



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A private prison company donated more than \$1.4 million to President Trump's political operation last month after his administration awarded contracts that could pay the company \$165 million a year to house immigrants awaiting deportation.

The donations from a subsidiary of the GEO Group were disclosed in a campaign finance report filed by MAGA Inc., a super PAC run by Mr. Trump's allies.

GEO donated \$1 million on July 16, three days after the company announced that it had signed a five-year contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement that will pay the company \$85 million a year to operate a 1,188-bed detention center in Hudson, Colo.

GEO donated an additional \$413,000 on July 31, two days after it announced the signing of another five-year contract with ICE that will pay \$80 million annually to operate a 1,320-bed detention facility in Winton, N.C.

Lauren Bis, a spokeswoman for the White House, rejected any link between the donations and the GEO Group's government business.

"Any allegation that political donations play a role in agencies awarding government contracts are false," Ms. Bis said in a statement. "It is not shocking that ICE is announcing more contracts to detain illegal aliens as President Trump carries out the largest deportation operation in American history."

The Department of Homeland Security said in a statement that "the competitive selection of federal contractors is a heavily regulated process" and that the department "runs this process by the book."

MAGA Inc. and the GEO Group did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The GEO Group is one of the largest private prison operators in the country, and it has won contracts from ICE under presidents of both parties. Federal and state inspectors have accused it of substandard care and conditions, allegations the company has disputed. Among the facilities the company operates is Delaney Hall in New Jersey, which became a site of protests this year amid reports of unsafe living conditions. In May, detainees at the 1,000-bed complex went on a hunger strike, and Democratic politicians have demanded access to the site.

There is no evidence linking the donations from the company to contracts awarded to the company under Mr. Trump. But the president and his administration have afforded access or favorable treatment to large corporate donors to MAGA Inc., including tobacco companies, a biotech firm, nursing home operators and a firm that owns a bridge between Detroit and Canada.

The GEO Group, which relies heavily on contracts with ICE, has seen profits soar amid the Trump administration's mass deportation campaign. Last year, the GEO Group reported \$254.3 million in net income, up from \$31.9 million in the last year

of the Biden administration.

It was “the largest amount of new business we have won in a single year in our company’s history,” George Zoley, the company’s founder, said on an earnings call in May. He boasted of “better-than-expected performance” this year, and that was before the two new contracts last month.

The detention center in North Carolina for which the GEO Group received the ICE contract has been closed since 2021, when the Biden administration moved to end federal contracts with for-profit prisons. The facility, which the GEO Group owns, will be among the largest ICE detention centers on the East Coast.

A former company official, David Venturella, was tapped to run ICE on an acting basis this year.

The GEO Group has long favored Republicans in its political giving, but it has ramped up its donations since Mr. Trump recaptured the presidency.

The company’s political action committee donated \$500,000 to his inaugural committee in late 2024. And GEO Reentry Services, a subsidiary of the GEO Group, has donated more than \$4.4 million to MAGA Inc. since the beginning of last year.

Second-term presidents usually begin winding down their own fund-raising after their inaugurations, focusing instead on bolstering their parties’ committees and candidates.

But Mr. Trump has continued aggressively raising money for his own political operation and favored causes, including a White House ballroom and a group that supported flashy initiatives he planned around the nation’s 250th birthday.

MAGA Inc. has raised more than \$400 million since the beginning of last year, including from donors with interests before the administration.

Republicans have grumbled that MAGA Inc. has been slow to spend on behalf of their candidates.

Mr. Trump said this month that the PAC will use its cash reserves to help his party in this fall's midterm elections.

“I control it,” he said in an interview with Punchbowl News, adding: “I could spend it on pretty much anything I want. I’m going to spend it for — I’m going to help Republicans.”

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