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DETENTION
WATCH NETWORK



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Death in Georgia ICE Prison Prompts Advocates to Call for Immediate Independent Investigation

Lumpkin, Georgia — The death toll in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody continues to rise with the tragic passing of Denny Adán González, 33, who died on April 28 at the Stewart Detention Center in Georgia. His official cause of death remains under investigation. Gonzalez was reportedly in solitary confinement at the time of his death, a practice internationally recognized as torture. Advocates are calling for a full independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. González and the rampant use of force at the Stewart Detention Center.

González's untimely passing marks a historic and horrifying rate of death in ICE custody — 18 deaths in ICE custody in just four months of 2026 and [49 total deaths](#) since Trump began his second term.

Operated by private prison corporation, CoreCivic, the Stewart Detention Center is one of the largest ICE detention centers in the country with an average daily population of over [2,000 people](#). The Stewart Detention Center has a long-record of abuse and death. People detained at the Stewart Detention Center and immigrants' rights advocates have been exposing inhumane conditions there for over a decade. Documented abuses include [inept mental health care](#), [use of solitary confinement](#), [unsanitary conditions](#), [COVID-19 negligence](#), [medical neglect](#), [forced labor](#), and [use of force against people detained](#). In 2023, women bravely stepped forward to submit [federal complaints](#) about the [sexual assault](#) they experienced at the hands of a Stewart nurse from May 2021 to May 2022.

Last week, Congress passed a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding bill that zeroes out annual appropriations for ICE. This is the first time in ICE's history that Congress has passed a bill that does not provide funding for the agency, serving as a

mirror to the inflection point we have reached as a society over the growing opposition to ICE abuse and death and Trump's cruel mass detention and deportation agenda.

Immigrants' rights advocates in Georgia and across the country responded with the following statements:

Amílcar Valencia, Executive Director of El Refugio, said:

"We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Denny Adan Gonzalez's family. No one should die in detention; sadly, detention deaths have dramatically increased under this regime. Stewart Detention Center has a reputation as one of the deadliest detention centers in the country. Mr. Gonzalez joins the long list of immigrants who die in this facility, 14 in total. They were real people, they had families, people who loved them, people who miss them. Someone was waiting for them at home after work, someone was looking forward to having a date with them, someone was waiting to play with them, someone was hoping to hug them and grow old together. The detention system is killing our community. Action is needed now; we can't allow more people to be put at risk. We demand justice, a full independent investigation of all deaths at this facility, and a commitment from Congress to terminate CoreCivic's contract and shut down Stewart."

Priyanka Bhatt, Senior Staff Attorney with Project South, said:

"We are enraged and heartbroken mourning yet another death at ICE's Stewart Detention Center. Mr. Denny Adán González's death marks the 21st death in ICE custody in Georgia. This staggering and shameful number will only continue to grow unless action is taken now. The responsibility for the unconscionable number of deaths lies in the hands of ICE and the private prison corporation CoreCivic. This fundamentally violent and profit-mongering system must be shut down."

Adelina Nicholls, Executive Director of the Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights, said:

"We are devastated by the tragic death of Denny Adán González and extend our deepest condolences to his loved ones and community. His passing is not an isolated incident, but a part of a deeply troubling pattern of neglect, abuse, and dehumanization inside ICE detention facilities. No person should be subjected to conditions that drive them to despair – not in immigrant detention centers or in the carceral system.

We unequivocally condemn the inhumane treatment reported at the Stewart Detention Center, including the use of prolonged solitary confinement, inadequate mental health care, and a long documented history of abuses and neglect. These cages are not only unacceptable, they are dangerous and life-threatening. At the same time, we refuse to accept this as inevitable. We stand in solidarity with immigrants, advocates, and families demanding accountability and systemic change. We will continue to fight for the closure

of facilities that perpetuate harm and to abolish ICE in Georgia and beyond. The death of Denny Adán González is to be mourned and to catalyze us into action. No more deaths. No more cages. Not One More.”

Uchechukwu Onwa, National Civic Engagement Coordinator of Black Alliance for Just Immigration, said:

“The death of Denny Adán Gonzalez was more than a tragedy, it was a preventable death. ICE detention creates conditions of isolation, neglect, and despair that put lives at risk. Stewart and other detention centers neglect mental and physical health stripping people of their dignity and humanity. Furthermore, solitary confinement is torture; and the Trump regime through ICE are deliberate in harming out communities. We demand an end to detention in all forms.”

Setareh Ghandehari, Advocacy Director of Detention Watch Network, said:

“We are deeply saddened and equally enraged that a shocking 18 people have died in ICE custody this calendar year — and [49 deaths total under this administration](#). Deaths in ICE custody continue to skyrocket past previous record highs amidst the Trump administration’s massive expansion of immigration detention and increasing ICE violence. ICE’s immigration detention system deprives people of freedom, isolates people away from loved ones, and subjects people to abysmal conditions, including inadequate medical care and mental health services, inedible food, and racist abuse. As Republicans in Congress continue to push for billions in additional ICE funding, the demands to cut ICE funding and repeal the billions of dollars passed in last year’s reconciliation bill remain abundantly clear, urgent, and necessary. We must collectively call for an end to the ICE age to stop the loss of life in ICE custody and to keep people and communities safe.”

Samantha C. Hamilton, Senior Staff Attorney of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta, said:

"Every employee at ICE and CoreCivic who runs the profit-maximizing venture that is the Stewart Detention Center have blood on their hands. The detention and deportation machine continues to remind us that it is not intended to keep communities safe, and it never was. Our hearts go out to the family of Denny Adán González and all of the families who have lost loved ones to ICE's cruelty. We join the call for a thorough, independent investigation into González's senseless death and accountability for all of those responsible."

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