



June 17, 2014

Mr. William H. Gates, III
c/o The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
500 Fifth Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Gates,

As Gates Scholars, we are intimately aware of the transformative potential of The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Your investments in people from underrepresented communities who are committed to technology and public service have paid dividends to society that far exceed the cost of our education.

The deep truth of this statement does not mean that your investments can not also do great social harm. Sinking money into institutions that systematically disadvantage and mistreat young people and people of color supports and multiplies the ills these entities create.

That's why we were saddened to learn that The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, an institution we profoundly appreciate and trust, has chosen to invest over \$2 million in The GEO Group, America's second largest for-profit private prison operator. It is our belief that this investment undermines The Gates Foundation's mission, and we, the undersigned Gates Millennium and Public Interest Law Scholars, call on you to immediately divest from The GEO Group and other private prison interests.

The GEO Group is a company that has been sanctioned repeatedly for keeping immigrant detainees and prisoners in filthy and degrading conditions. The GEO Group supports additional incarceration, heavier sentences, and imprisonment of immigrant and undocumented families. In fact, many of those held in GEO detention facilities tend to be permanent residents. Quite simply, they are profiteers of human suffering, and their profit motive compels them to increase suffering.

As Gates Scholars, we believe that it is not enough to do well; we must also do good. This value, one that we learned from our affiliation with The Gates Foundation, impels us to speak out against the Foundation Trust's investment in for-profit private prisons. We were encouraged to learn that of the Foundation Trust's recent divestment from G4S, the international private jailer. We sincerely hope this portends your imminent divestment from The GEO Group. We call on you to renew your commitment to

underrepresented communities, and immediately and permanently divest from all private prison companies.

Sincerely,

Gates Scholars

Sarah Lippek
Benjamin Miller
Lillian Hewko
Meena Jagannath
Jeni Krencicki Barcelos
Salmun Kazerounian
Nicholas Marritz
Mike Felton
Shizuko Hashimoto
Naomi Tewodros
Michael Geoghegan
Ashley Paintner
Sadia Arshad
Walid Rahman