

McHenry County's Motion to Dismiss Denied at the US District Court

Today, Honorable Iain D. Johnston of the US District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Western Division denied the McHenry County's motion to dismiss. The judge ruled that we the plaintiffs have "adequately alleged claims under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and ITVPA.

Along with co-counsel Elizabeth Mazur and Margaret Truesdale of HSPRD, Jay Kumar, and Jacob Briskman, we represent the detained immigrants at the McHenry Detention Center who were forced to clean "showers and common area toilets, wipe down tables, and sweep and mop the floors without any compensation.

Nor did these immigrants have an option to refuse the labor. When the detainees first entered the facility, they were told to "obey orders and perform labor if they wish to avoid going to the 'hole,'" which meant disciplinary segregation. In some cases, they were threatened that they would lose recreational time, opportunities to use their phones, access the library, and get a haircut.

We are grateful for the victory today and will keep fighting for the rights of these most vulnerable individuals as well as the foundational values of our nation.