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LD 2106

Until the Trump administration removed it, ICE enforcement was not allowed to happen at places like schools, hospitals, and libraries. This policy has long been common sense and allowed people to meet their basic human needs regardless of their immigration status. Now, with this policy removed nationwide, the current administration is using fear tactics to target immigrant communities by separating families, conducting arrests in front of schools, and detaining people in inhumane conditions. Members of immigrant communities are now afraid to leave their homes, go to work, send their children to school, seek healthcare or social services, attend religious services, exercise their religion, move freely, and more.

As a former teacher, I had many students whose parents were non-citizens. I saw how school was a safe space for these students and families. Simply being a non-white immigrant in Maine, who may not speak English yet, who may have trauma from traveling here and what they experienced in their home country, and who is trying to work and provide for a family is complicated enough. I can only imagine how disruptive it is when those families don't feel safe sending their kids to school. And then, if they have to watch their kids at home, they cannot go to work. This has ripple effects throughout the whole community and economy. And for the students, missing extended periods of school is never good. Kids will experience isolation from their friends, miss out on learning, and experience even more fear and trauma if they are hiding out at home unable to leave the house.

I support LD 2106 so that ICE may not enter or conduct enforcement at sensitive locations like schools, healthcare facilities, daycares, and libraries. Maine must protect our immigrant communities in every way possible. We are all Mainers. No one is safe until we are all safe to conduct the business of our everyday lives free from fear.