

Leah Douglass
Portland
LD 2106

Hello Judiciary Committee,

My name is Leah Douglass, I am a teacher and resident in Portland, Maine I am writing testimony in support of LD 2106. Thank you for taking the time to read and vote on this important issue.

I have been teaching for 13 years. Our first priority as educators is our students' safety. Of course we want our students to love our subjects, to be passionate, engaged learners, and to have fun, but before they can do any of that they have to feel and be safe. At the moment we have students not coming to school because they are afraid of being targeted. Parents are afraid to send their students to school and never see them again and students are afraid to come home to an empty house. It's hard to focus on an essay for your English class in this environment.

As a teacher, we have been trained in trauma informed education. I imagine, masked agents coming into your school, reviewing private documents, and removing your classmates would be a trauma that no amount of teacher training could reduce. Students, your children's, grandchildren's, nieces, nephews and neighbors, schools would never feel safe again knowing that they could be taken from their schools. If students have to choose between their and their families safety and passing their algebra test, I know which one they will choose and I don't blame them.

In Maine there are at least 21,000 students who are U.S. citizens who have at least one parent who is not. That's a lot of classrooms living in fear. Passing this legislation is an issue of public health, safety, and an educational issue.

Please help give them extra peace of mind. Please pass LD2106 and let schools be a place of safety and learning.