

Melinda Corey
Albion
LD 2106

I'm writing today to testify in support of LD 2106. I write as a parent, special educator, state employee (writing on my own time), and proud Mainer.

One of the Trump administration's first actions in office was to eliminate a federal policy that prohibited ICE enforcement actions at places like schools and hospitals. This longstanding and commonsense policy — which had stood for decades across Democratic and Republican administrations — had ensured that all people could access crucial public services and meet basic human needs without fear.

Democrats and Republicans alike recognized the important public policy reasons of making sure all children, regardless of immigration status, can receive an education (as well as food and other stability provided at school), that all people can seek medical care and share important public health information, and more.

It was also clear that such policies did not pose any significant impediment to law enforcement, and the important public health reasons of ensuring all people could access these places far outweighed immigration enforcement needs.

Under the current administration, immigration enforcement is broad and indiscriminate, targeting immigrant communities in general and creating a public health crisis that includes extreme fear and trauma, as well as actual family separation, detention in inhumane conditions, and deportation to life-threatening circumstances.

Since the Trump administration began its mass deportation campaign, immigrant families in Maine have been afraid to leave their homes, to go to work, send their children to school, seek healthcare, seek social services, attend religious services, exercise their religion, move freely, and more. LD 2106 protects people accessing services at these sensitive locations, as well as the people who work there. I have seen this firsthand through my current professional role, and I understand it well from previous roles as a religious leader in my parish, and as an early childhood home visitor and educator, serving vulnerable disabled children and their families.

Now with ICE's new operation underway in Maine, the need for LD 2106 is heightened and even more urgent. This bill is also about protecting Maine's overall workforce and economy - when parents don't feel safe sending their kids to school or leaving them at daycare, they can't go to work. While Maine does not have the authority to prohibit all immigration enforcement at places like schools, hospitals, and daycares – which is governed by federal law – the state can put in place measures to ensure we are not actively permitting enforcement at these places.

Under the Constitution, to enter non-public areas, law enforcement officers must either present a valid judicial warrant OR receive voluntary consent to enter. LD 2106 would provide important clarity and guidance to workers at these places that a decision has been made by Maine's state government that immigration officers are prohibited from entering these locations without a valid judicial warrant, and workers at these places are not allowed to provide voluntary consent to all immigration officers to enter. Additionally, LD 2106 provides guidance that these places are prohibited from voluntarily providing immigration information they may have about Maine residents to immigration officers, unless presented with a valid judicial warrant or otherwise required by law.

Accordingly, LD 2106 protects the rights and safety of vulnerable Maine residents, including children, workers at public schools, healthcare facilities, daycares, and libraries, and serves key public policy interests, including making sure all Maine children receive an education and public health information is freely shared.

I thank you for your time and consideration, and urge you to vote in support of LD 2106.