

Janel Knightly
Portland
LD 2106

I am writing in support of LD 2106. It is crucial - and commonsense - that every person in our community be able to access health care, mental health services, education, and childcare without fear. In the past, both Democratic and Republican administrations had ensured that all people could access crucial public services and meet basic human needs without fear. It is tearing apart the fabric of our society that the current administration has done away with this policy and I want to express my full support for reinstating these protections. Now, with ICE's new operation underway in Maine, the need for LD 2106 is heightened and even more urgent. I have given my career to working with immigrant communities, and I can testify that I have seen first hand the overwhelming fear that is present right now. Individuals who have made this state a wonderful and diverse place to live, and who are law-abiding and present in the US legally, are afraid to leave their homes, go to work, send their children to school, shop for groceries, and attend health care appointments. Their realities changed overnight and they are having to make choices and consider realities that no one should have to. As a mother, my heart aches for the parents who are having to withhold their children from school, or keep them from daycare, or who are running out of money and food because they cannot go to work. This kind of fear has no place in Maine. This bill is about basic human decency and 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. Thank you for your time.