

Abigail Shultz
Bangor, Maine
LD 2106

Hello my name is Abigail Shultz. I live in Bangor, Maine.

I am here today as a citizen of Maine, a licensed social worker, and someone who works directly with some of the most underprivileged people in our state.

I am someone who is deeply committed to making sure that everyone around me is being treated fairly, with humanity, justice, and compassion.

I am here to speak in support of LD 2106, sponsored by Representative Sato. I want to thank my representative Rana for her co-sponsorship of this bill as well.

This legislation is important to me because everyone deserves to access the services they need without fear. As a social worker, I have access to a lot of private and sensitive information shared with me by clients. It is my duty to protect my clients' confidentiality, and without that trust and privacy my work to improve their lives would be impossible. In my work I come in contact with numerous families who are stretched as thin as can be, trying to stay afloat financially and manage the responsibilities of raising children.

If these families have to live in fear of being betrayed by me, their social worker, by their childcare providers, by their educators, by their healthcare providers, and by their community resource providers, they might not make it. "Not making it" looks like kids going hungry. It looks like sick people not getting the medicine they can barely afford anyway. It looks like children who have learning disabilities beginning to struggle with school attendance and falling further and further behind. It looks like parents who are struggling with their mental health suffering alone without support. It looks like Mainers, whether they were born here or came here later, living in fear and isolation.

When people need help, they need not live in fear. We have all seen that ICE does not care about your immigration or refugee status, your criminal background, where you were born, or the color of your skin. They are willing to trample the Constitutional rights of anyone who stands up against them, because they want us living in fear and isolation. The protections and rights of the law extend to EVERYONE on US soil regardless of their citizenship.

Maine's motto is Dirigo - I lead. I am asking that Maine's legislature lead by example in passing LD 2106 so that all Maine families can access the support they need without fear of being profiled and having their rights trampled by an agency that does not care about their humanity. This law will embolden all workers in these educational, healthcare, childcare, and library facilities to know that they can protect their community with the power of Maine State Law backing them up in their bravery.

It is for these reasons that I am here today to urge you to support LD 2106.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.