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LD 2106 - An Act to Prohibit the Disclosure of Nonpublic Records Without Proper Judicial Review

Position: **SUPPORT**

To the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing this testimony in SUPPORT of the act to prohibit the disclosure of nonpublic records without proper judicial review.

As a mother and as a clinical social worker that specializes in perinatal mental health, grief, and trauma, I implore you to not allow ICE to be able to enter Maine's schools, daycares, libraries, and healthcare facilities without a valid judicial warrant.

It is imperative that ICE agents should not be allowed into these places where our children spend so much of their time. It is essential that ICE agents should not be allowed to enter places like libraries and healthcare facilities where some of our most vulnerable populations live, work, rest, and play.

Records that are private and protected by acts such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) need to remain that way. Non-public records are not documents that should be made available and accessible to ICE to then be wielded as a weapon and bait to draw out our children and the parents and guardians who love them. These records are protected by Acts created specifically to ensure the safety of our children and our vulnerable populations.

Access to a safe education is a fundamental human right, one that is recognized around the world, to ensure that all children, all students, can learn without fear or threat of violence, bullying, discrimination, and brutality. Without the fear that they will leave school at the end of the day and be abducted by an ICE agent. Without fear that they will be used to lure their parents out into the open so that they can be taken away without cause. Allowing ICE agents to enter schools, daycares, and libraries rips this basic human right away.

As a clinical social worker, I see mostly women and mothers in my psychotherapy practice. I hold space for the grief and trauma that comes with miscarriage, stillbirth, NICU experiences, and infertility. I hold these people as they grieve babies they had and lost, or are not able to have. Please do not make me hold these women as they grieve the trauma and pain of watching ICE agents infiltrate our schools and daycares. I will do it, because I can and I have to. But please, do not choose to align yourselves with these ICE agents who want to enter places that are meant for education and learning and growth.

As a mother, I live every day with the painful dichotomy of holding onto what is happening in this world, in our country, while making breakfast for my kids. I sit and weep silently with a hand pressed over my mouth, squatting on my kitchen floor while my babies watch Paw Patrol in the other room. Then I stand, wipe my tears, and bring them a snack. How do I tell them that their government, the people who are supposed to protect them, are going to allow ICE agents to enter their childcare facility and rip away their friends? How do I keep them safe when I know that it is not safe in this world right now?

It is your job, dear Judiciary Committee, to refuse this. It is your job to stand on the right side of history in the making and to protect our babies. These children are all of our children. There is no such thing as other people's children.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meghan Collier', with a stylized, flowing script.

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Please see attached file.