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LD 2106

I urge you to pass LD 2106, which would ensure that ICE cannot enter Maine's schools, daycares, healthcare facilities, or libraries without a valid judicial warrant.

I work with multilingual English speakers, teachers, and communities who are terrified to attend school because of recent ICE actions in the state. This fear impacts all of us, not just our New Mainer neighbors and I ask you to support this legislation that would work to re-establish some sense of safety in our communities, improving access to and quality of education.

With over 21,000 students enrolled in Maine schools having at least one non-citizen parent, this policy would have a broad impact in increasing safety, security, attendance, and quality of education. 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 write on behalf of my personal expertise and experience and not on behalf of my institution.