



INSPIRED CONSULTING GROUP, LLC

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Testimony in Support of LD 2106: An Act to Prohibit the Disclosure of Nonpublic Records Without Proper Judicial Review

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Chris McLaughlin, and I am a licensed clinical social worker, behavioral health consultant, and educator with over 25 years of experience working with youth, families, and communities across the state of Maine. I am also the owner of Inspired Consulting Group, a Maine-based behavioral health, DEI&B, and leadership consulting firm. I submit this statement to you today in support of LD 2106.

In my current work, I partner with schools, healthcare organizations, early childhood education programs, youth-serving organizations, and community-based providers across Maine. I work directly alongside frontline teams who serve children, families, and adults navigating trauma, instability, and crisis, including many members of Maine's immigrant and refugee communities. My testimony today is grounded not only in social work's professional values, but in what I am bearing witness to in real time across our state.

Social workers and other allied health professionals are embedded in the very institutions this bill seeks to protect. We are in classrooms, daycare programs, libraries, and hospital emergency departments and patient floors every day. Among our many roles in these settings is to help stabilize individuals and families, reduce harm, and strengthen community safety. That work becomes impossible when fear replaces trust.

In recent months, that fear has become palpable. Through my work, I am hearing from providers who are supporting families afraid to seek medical care, parents keeping children home from school, and workers leaving jobs they rely on for survival. I know of countless families who cannot even go to the grocery store without fear that they might not return. These are not abstract policy outcomes; they are immediate, destabilizing realities.

The actions associated with current immigration enforcement practices are not limited to individuals with serious criminal histories. Immigrant neighbors, coworkers, and caregivers, many with legal status, work authorization, or pending asylum claims, are being detained in ways that are traumatic, disruptive, and deeply destabilizing to families. Children are

witnessing arrests. Parents are disappearing from households. Individuals are being transported out of state, severing access to legal counsel and community support. I cannot overstate the long-term impacts that these multiple layers of trauma will have on children here in Maine. As a behavioral health expert, I can assure you that there are lifelong human consequences to the actions taking place across Maine today.

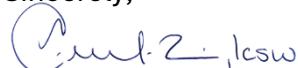
This climate of fear is also spilling outward to those professionals providing care to these communities across Maine. Not since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic over 5 years ago have I seen the levels of burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma in Maine's behavioral health workforce that I am seeing today. Every supervision or education session I facilitate, whether that be for case managers, in-home support teams, educators, or social work students, is completely dominated by themes of provider/student hopelessness, helplessness, anxiety, and fear. For a workforce already so overwhelmed by the increased demand for behavioral health services in our state, this is another potentially catastrophic scenario waiting to unfold. Simply put, *“I think I’ve seen this film before, and I didn’t like the ending.”

LD 2106 is a critical step toward restoring safety, trust, and access to essential services. Schools, hospitals, daycares, and libraries must remain spaces where people can seek care, education, and support without fear of detention or worse. When these institutions are compromised, the ripple effects harm not only immigrant families, but the broader systems that all Mainers rely on. What we are witnessing now mirrors patterns seen during other crises: families retreating, services underutilized, and community trust eroding. That is not healthy for individuals, not sustainable for systems of care, and not good for Maine’s economy.

This bill is about public safety, but safety defined broadly and responsibly. This bill seeks to preserve the integrity of essential services, prevent unnecessary trauma, and ensure that Maine remains a place where people can live, work, learn, and heal while moving through the legal processes already in place for individuals seeking citizenship or asylum. This bill is also about humanity, empathy, and common decency. I respectfully urge you to support LD 2106 and to take every possible step to protect our communities from the kind of fear-driven escalation we have seen elsewhere in the country. As we’ve done in the past, Maine has the opportunity to once again lead with clarity, compassion, and courage.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Chris McLaughlin, MSW, LCSW
Owner and Lead Consultant
Inspired Consulting Group, LLC

Notations: **Taylor Swift, “Exile”*