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LD 2106

Good afternoon all, thank you for taking the time to read this testimony.

It is vitally important that LD 2106 pass, and reinstate protections to vulnerable groups that once already existed. Previously, our immigrant communities and the people that serve them did not have to interact with ICE in places like schools and hospitals. There was an understanding that people should not have to carry fear around them when they are in the places that are supposed to protect them, supposed to foster healing and growth, supposed to be a place of refuge.

School was a place of refuge for me when I was younger, it connected me with my friends and trusted adults. I was able to spend time exploring who I was and what I was interested in. I did not have to think about if someone was going to come after me at school, and neither should any student today. We should offer that same solace and protection to today's students again.

Children should be focused on their imagination, social skills, and understanding life while they are at daycare. Growing up daycare is about dinosaurs and remembering to wash your hands before snack time. Not worrying about whether or not you will make it home to see your parents.

Policies similar to LD 2106 (and the one previously in place) do not pose any significant impediment to local, county, and state law enforcement ensuring that people can access crucial public goods without interfering with state officials. This far outweighs any potential immigration enforcement needs.

We are currently experiencing an assault on our communities unlike one I have seen in my lifetime. Families are afraid to go to work, go to school, and go to the hospital to get the care they need. We need to protect them in any way that we can. This bill is urgently needed considering the ferocity of ICE's presence, and the fact that these are the protections that already once existed.

Additionally, LD 2106 assists more than just our immigrant neighbors. It also reduces wasted time for nurses, school officials, and public librarians who are already struggling with being under resourced and staffed. By passing LD 2106 we could assist these essential employees in reducing the amount in which they should be interacting with ICE. LD 2106 would also provide important guidance to those who are in their place of employment and unsure what rules they have to follow. Currently, the rules vary from job to job which can cause confusion and potentially lead to private information being exposed which shouldn't be because people are afraid of accidentally not complying.

Everyone says that Maine is one big town, that everyone knows everyone. Most of the Mainers I know would be willing to give the shirt of their back to their neighbors. Passing LD 2106 is the equivalent of a proverbial sock or the hair tie off your wrist- nowhere near the whole shirt. The bare minimum we can do as a state is re-instate the legal protections once offered to our neighbors, friends, colleagues, and family members.