

Miranda Gallo
Yarmouth
LD 2106

Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Miranda Gallo and I am a resident of Yarmouth, Maine.

I am writing today in support of LD 2106, which would restrict federal immigration enforcement from entering hospitals, libraries, daycares, and schools without a judicial warrant. These places serve as critical resources for thousands of individuals and families in our state. But many of our neighbors are too afraid to access these spaces because of the recent indiscriminate, violent actions of ICE. By restricting ICE's access to these community places, we can ensure that everyone can use these basic services without fear.

Our children's daycare in Portland provides a diverse, loving, and safe place for them to grow and learn. Their classmates speak multiple languages, look different from them, and are the sweetest of friends. These past two weeks, those friends have been missing from school, sheltering with their families at home. Our daycare community has reached out to support these families, eager to make sure our neighbors are cared for, but what they really need is for their kids to feel safe at school, for them to not think twice before going to the hospital, or the library, or parent-teacher conferences. What our community needs is for parents to not worry that school drop-off is being used as a tool for ICE agents to target them, leaving their family fractured. Right now my four year old just notices that she hasn't seen certain friends in a long time - but what she's learning is that, in Maine, her friends that look different from her, that speak with an accent, or have parents who were born somewhere else, aren't safe and aren't protected. This isn't who we are, and it's time to take local and state action to protect our neighbors, protect our civil rights, and protect our constitution.

We've seen online, in the media, and in our own lives that healthcare providers, teachers, and caregivers feel unsafe going to work, families are afraid to send their children to school, and people are afraid to seek medical care they need. These disruptions harm the public health and well-being of our entire community. LD 2106 would mitigate some of these impacts by prohibiting ICE from accessing sensitive locations that people rely on to meet their basic needs.

In this frigid winter, many of our neighbors experiencing homelessness are also putting themselves at further risk due to fear of ICE. Libraries often serve as daytime warming shelters while also providing access to resources and information that can help unhoused people move out of homelessness. Hospitals and emergency rooms often serve as these individuals' only source of healthcare. If our unhoused neighbors are afraid to use these locations, they may stay outside or avoid treatment — putting their lives at risk. LD 2106 could remove a barrier to potentially life-saving services for individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty.

Please support LD 2106, and ensure that Maine's schools, libraries, healthcare centers, and daycares are a safe place for all who need them.