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Cumberland  
LD 2106

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF LD 2106

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

Submitted to:

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary  
132nd Maine Legislature

Submitted by:

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Jesse and I'm an emergency department nurse practicing here in Maine. I'm here today to speak in support of LD 2106.

Over the past month, our communities have witnessed an unprecedented increase in federal immigration enforcement activity. The operation here in Maine has been dubbed "Catch of the Day." In a way, this disgusting, dehumanizing title is apt because unskilled, untrained, and masked ICE agents use an indiscriminate, drag net approach. This isn't a target operation; ICE detains people to meet a quota. The past weeks have shown us that nobody is safe, regardless of citizenship or legal status.

Hundreds of individuals have already been detained, and our friends, family, and neighbors are in deep fear and uncertainty. ICE roams our state like historical slave patrols roamed the South, profiling people based on skin color and terrorizing Mainers.

One local example that has circulated widely in community reporting involves an 18-year-old man taken by ICE outside a Market Basket in Westbrook, despite having a pending asylum case. He required legal support to request bond and his family was devastated by his abrupt removal. This situation illustrates how everyday people are being abruptly taken from their lives here in Maine. Immigrants, both documented and undocumented, those with legal status and without, have gotten the message: they must shelter in place; they must not go out, lest they risk detention and abduction.

My own anxiety as I head into work each morning has dramatically increased. I play out scenarios in my mind and rehearse de-escalation techniques aloud. We all know, having witnessed the execution of ICU nurse Alex Pretti in Minneapolis, that healthcare workers are no exception to the rule.

While the legality and specifics of these operations are being debated in courts and in the press, the impact on public health has the potential to be profound.

We know from published medical research during the COVID-19 pandemic that when people feared going to the hospital, emergency department visits dropped dramatically, and patients who did eventually seek care often presented much sicker than they should have. I certainly saw this in practice between 2020 and 2021, working at Pen Bay Medical Center.

In one multicenter study, patients who delayed care by more than 24 hours for serious conditions had significantly higher 28-day mortality compared with those who presented sooner. During that period, many individuals reported avoiding care out of fear.

As a nurse dedicated to preserving life and dignity, I strongly urge you to support LD 2106 — to protect privacy, reduce fear, and ensure that people can come to hospitals and clinics when they are sick, without fear of sudden enforcement or detention.

LD 2106 helps protect that essential trust between healthcare providers and patients by ensuring that nonpublic health records and sensitive locations are accessed only

with proper judicial review.  
Thank you.