

My name is Hannah. I am a resident of a small, rural town close to Waterville. My partner and I chose to move back to Maine two years ago to make our forever home as a young family because of what Maine offers - community values, small towns with big hearts, and safety - the way life should be. We are actively involved in our community. We donate and volunteer with the local food pantry, we prioritize supporting local businesses, and are patrons of the arts that have blossomed in downtown Waterville.

My partner is a teacher in a special education elementary school classroom. My partner works directly with kindergartners through second graders who need additional support in the classroom. Every day, my partner is scared to go to work. And this is not the usual fear of being a public school teacher in America where every day gun violence is rampant in our classrooms. This is a new fear - a fear that ICE will indiscriminately kidnap my partner's students, and my partner will be helpless to protect them. My partner cries themselves to sleep at night with anxiety and fear over if their students are detained. Will they even know? Or will their students just disappear slowly and stop coming to school, and my partner will never know if they are safe, will never again draw pictures of Bluey together, or make up songs to learn how to tie their shoes, and they will never have the opportunity to celebrate milestones because their students have been disappeared?

We picture 5 year old Liam Ramos in his blue hat and backpack being used as bait by ICE to lure his family members out of the house. We picture Liam scared, alone, and confused in a detention center hundreds of miles away from home. My partner imagines their students, who might not understand what is happening, who have special needs, who need medication and support with basic needs, who utilize alternative communication devices...**how** are we at a place in our lives where the people of this state need to beg their government to support and pass a bipartisan bill to protect more than 21,000 US citizen children in Maine who have at least one non-citizen parent? The federal policy that prohibited ICE enforcement actions at places like schools and hospitals was in place for decades with good reason - it ensures that all people can access essential public services and meet basic human needs - education, healthcare, etc. - without fear. LD 2106 protects the people of our state accessing these services at sensitive locations, **as well as** the people who work there. Our teachers, doctors, nurses, librarians, daycare providers, and all the helpers of our state need to be able to do their jobs without worrying that they will be shot for trying to help. Alex Petti was a helper. Alex Petti was an ICU nurse with the VA. Alex Petti's last words were "are you okay?". I ask you that question, are you okay with what is happening in our state?

My partner's elementary school put on the school play Peter Pan Jr. We went to support and celebrate their success on a frigid, single-digit temperature Saturday afternoon. Kids shrieked with laughter in the auditorium, ran through the aisles, and we could hear the students behind the curtain before the play started, who were so excited to share their hard work with their family, loved ones, and community. The drama program director tells the kids "Be Seen, Be Heard, Be Brave".

The children of our communities should not suffer because of the prejudice of those in power. So I ask you. No, I beg you. Be Seen, Be Heard, Be Brave, like the children of our state. Do the right thing. Support LD 2106.

Hannah Moore
Fairfield
LD 2106

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