

Jane Makela, Esq.

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and distinguished members of the Committee on Judiciary .

My name is Jane Makela and I live in the town of Falmouth. I urge passage of **LD 2106** based on both my faith and my respect for the dedicated educators, healthcare workers and other service providers in this state.

My faith is Unitarian Universalism. Like people of many other faiths, we believe that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to live and flourish in our society with dignity, wherever their origin and whatever their immigration status. That should include the right to access and utilize the basic programs and services made available to the public here in Maine such as education and healthcare, without being terrorized by a quota-based ICE dragnet.

The need for this bill could not be any better illustrated than by the immigration enforcement operation being conducted in Maine right now, flippantly named as if it were a menu item at Applebee's ("Catch of the Day"). As our newspapers are reporting daily, people with clear legal status and no criminal convictions are being swept up and quickly transferred out of state. Children are being kept out of school by terrified parents. Lawyers are having to advise their immigrant clients that, despite their legal status or presence, they should stay home and basically hide.

This bill is also mindful of another significant population in our State, and that is the workers we ask to serve and care for those we hold most dear. These are frontline employees in our healthcare, educational, daycare and other facilities who may now be faced with ICE forcing their way through the door and demanding to search what should be protected records or to question those present to receive services or assistance. None of them signed on to be bouncers, and they shouldn't now have to make on-the-spot decisions about compliance in the absence of a judicial warrant.

In my congregation, we recite with our children this reminder of the values we seek to embody as part of the human family: "We are people of open minds, loving hearts and helping hands". In our State, if we cannot assure access to basic services for our immigrant neighbors free of government threats and oppression, and if we cannot assure workers we entrust with the care and safety of our own loved ones that their responsibilities do not include immigration enforcement, we will be a citizenry of closed minds, hard hearts and clenched fists. And all of us will be the poorer for it.

Thank you.

Jane Makela