



Testimony of Marpheen Chann for Khmer Maine before the
Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary

IN SUPPORT OF
L.D. 2106 An Act to Prohibit the Disclosure of Nonpublic Records
Without Proper Judicial Review
on January 29, 2026

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

My name is Marpheen Chann, and I am the Executive Director of Khmer Maine, a community organization that serves Maine's Cambodian and Southeast Asian communities, of which there are more than 10,000 who call Maine home.

In the past two weeks, I have watched our community change in ways I never thought I would see in Maine. Parents are keeping their children home from school. Multiple health care appointments canceled. Families are afraid to leave their homes to buy groceries or go to the food pantry. Elders are unwilling to leave their rooms, let alone their homes.

Portland Public Schools has reported attendance drops at some schools. At Maine Medical Center, many of their workers are forced to call-out because they are afraid to leave their homes or were being actively detained by ICE. Our hospitals are also seeing an uptick in medical appointments.

Every child in Maine has a right to an education. That right cannot be contingent on immigration status, on the origin of a parent, or on the accident of where someone was born. When children stop coming to school, they fall behind. When families fear that dropping a child off at the bus stop could mean never seeing them again, education becomes impossible. Learning requires safety. Learning requires trust. This bill ensures that our schools remain what they are supposed to be: places of learning, not places of fear.

This is a public health issue. Maine already faces healthcare workforce shortages. We cannot afford to have trained, dedicated workers too terrified to come to their shifts. We cannot afford to have patients avoid care until it is too late. L.D. 2106 draws a clear line: healthcare facilities are for healing. They are not staging grounds for enforcement operations.

This bill also extends protections to public libraries and childcare facilities—and rightly so. Many of us have witnessed a video of ICE agents in Minneapolis throwing tear gas near a daycare. These are the spaces where our communities come together. Where parents trust that their children will be safe. Where people of all backgrounds access information, support, and connection.

I spent five years on Portland's Planning Board working on housing, zoning, and sustainability. I served as an At-Large Charter Commissioner. In all of that work, I learned that policy is about people—about the conditions we create for them to live, work, and raise their families.

I have extended family who came to this country as immigrants. I know the hopes that motivate people to build new lives here. I also know the fear that can unravel those hopes when communities feel under attack by their own government.

We are better than this. Maine is better than this.

L.D. 2106 ensures that enforcement follows proper legal channels. It protects spaces that must remain trusted for our communities to function—our schools, our hospitals, our libraries, our childcare facilities.

It says that in Maine, people have a right to seek healthcare without fearing for their lives. Children have a right to go to school without their parents wondering if they will see them again. Families have a right to exist in their communities without being terrorized.

I urge this committee to support L.D. 2106. The fear in our communities is real, and it is causing harm right now—to children, to patients, to workers, to the fabric of community life. Harm that won't be healed overnight.

This bill provides clear guidance, requires proper judicial review, and protects the spaces where trust must be maintained.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marpheen Chann', written in a cursive style.

Marpheen Chann
Executive Director, Khmer Maine
Portland, Maine