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I am writing this testimony today as a mother. As a wife. And most importantly, a childcare worker.

Six months ago, my husband and I had a frank conversation about a dreaded hypothetical: what will we do if he is detained by ICE? Mind you, at the time this seemed like overkill. We're both US citizens, born and raised, and ICE wasn't harming US citizens. That part came later.

Still, we were scared. You see, my husband is what some may call racially ambiguous. He's been mistaken for indigenous, Hispanic, middle eastern. Therein lied our fear: what if he was mistaken for whatever racial group ICE wound up targeting in our area? So we huddled together to devise a plan for when they came, fueled by hatred and xenophobia, and took anyone who got in their way.

Since the beginning of 2026, we now know that I - a white woman- am equally in danger. And so are all of you. Because it doesn't matter what you look like or what citizenship status you have. ICE is shooting women in their vehicles, pepper spraying infants, gunning down men they've pinned to the ground. They're targeting churches, schools, and daycares. They are hunting us down one by one.

And I say "us" because it IS us. It's anyone who disagrees with the hateful rhetoric of their leadership. Anyone who despises the violent, criminal persecution of a people based on how they got to our country. Anyone who deters ICE agents via protest or, god forbid, exercises their rights by filming undesirable behavior.

They are raping women. Stealing children. And I'm sick of it.

Six days ago, I broke down in my boss's office at the childcare center where I work. The weight of looking, of bearing witness, of being the only staff member in my building paying attention had finally broken me. Because my employers hadn't even considered that ICE may come to our school and demand entry. There was no plan in place. Everyone assumes we have evolved past slave-catching tactics and gestapo morals.

But we haven't, have we? Just last week, a little boy named Liam Conejo Ramos was detained outside his home in Minnesota and used as bait. Five years old. Blue hat snug on his head. Characters on his backpack.

Schools in Minneapolis have shut down until at least mid-February because the streets aren't safe for children to be out. A family of six caught up in the chaos of a protest was pepper sprayed inside their vehicle, leaving a six month old in critical condition. Do we think it will be any different here? Make no mistake: our children are not safe as long as ICE holds a presence here in Maine.

It is imperative that the law be on our side when ICE comes knocking. It is my job to protect the children in my care. It is my job to lock the building down if armed personnel try to gain entry without legal access. It is my job to ensure those kids make it home to their parents, safe and unharmed, and that means both physically and mentally. I will not let the terror police into my building to intimidate workers, weaponize children, and abduct people just living their every day lives in peace.

Maine needs to adopt this legislation and ensure that when ICE storms a school or a daycare - when, not if - they are at least doing so illegally. So when we stand our ground and refuse them entry into our facilities, when our own officers arrest them for breaking our laws, when we get the chance to finally take these monsters to court, there will be no question who was in the wrong.

Thank you.