

Nicole Fogg
South Portland, ME
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Greeting chairs Carney, Kuhn and members of the Judiciary committee. My name is Nicole and I live in South Portland. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Today I am writing to urge you to vote “Ought not to Pass” on LD 2106. To ensure that people feel safe enough to exist and operate freely as members of their community feels like asking for the bare minimum. Eliminating a federal policy that prohibited ICE enforcement actions to take place in areas such as public schools, hospitals/healthcare facilities, daycares, and libraries also meant eliminating access to crucial public services for families in Maine. LD 2106 protects those that are seeking services at these sensitive locations, as well as the people who work there. Without the ability to move freely, vulnerable Maine residents are no longer able to meet their very basic needs without fear. *Safety IS a basic need.* Everyone is deserving of access to it, regardless of the color of their skin or country of origin. Immigrant families have been terrified to leave their homes, go to work, send their children to school, seek healthcare, seek social services, and more.

The mass deportation campaign underway that our current administration is conducting is not only cruel, but its effects reach far and wide. Our communities will be harmed in more ways than one. Businesses will only suffer, attendance at school and work will continue to decline, and spaces that are meant to be for all will no longer be serving their intended purpose. Without folks utilizing the resources that we all deserve to have connection with and entry to, Maine’s overall workforce and economy will no longer be protected. The state can (and should) put measures in place to ensure we are not actively permitting enforcement at these locations. To deny easy access to these baseline essential needs is not only extremely disheartening, but it’s inhumane.

Accordingly, LD 2106 protects the rights and safety of vulnerable Maine residents, including making sure all Maine children receive an education and that public health information is freely shared. As an individual that works closely with many children and families in my own community, I’ve seen the effects of the heartless and uncivilized threats folks are facing on a daily basis. There should never be a world in which the upstanding Maine residents I work with are living in fear, when I have free access to these services and spaces because of the color of my skin. As a white person, I am not concerned for my well-being when stepping into these environments. Attendance at school has plummeted, leaving many children who rely on schooling not only for education, but as a secure environment that provides a full belly and connection, in a state of unease. It is challenging to focus on learning when your family is at risk of being ripped apart - something no child should ever be concerned with.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and share my perspective on this matter. I urge you to consider not only the harm that’s been done thus far, but the damage that will continue to unfold if we are not proactive about protecting our communities moving forward. *Again, I urge this committee to vote “Ought not to Pass” on LD 2106.*