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LD 2106

Members of the committee, I respectfully urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 2106.

One of the first actions taken by the Trump administration was to revoke federal policy that prohibited immigration enforcement actions by ICE at locations that should be safe-havens for anyone living in America. These locations include schools, hospitals, and places of worship. This longstanding policy has never been controversial. For decades, both Democrats and Republicans have supported it. This is because it allows all people, regardless of their immigration status, to access essential services and meet basic human needs without fear.

Ending this policy has not made our communities safer. Instead, it has allowed indiscriminate and inhumane immigration enforcement that has torn families apart. For years now, and especially in the past few weeks, families have lived with the fear that any trip to work, any school drop-off, or any doctor’s appointment could result in violent arrest, detention in horrible conditions, or deportation.

We are seeing this fear intensify right now in Maine. Last September, an immigration-related arrest was conducted in the driveway of an elementary school in Portland. There is no reason for this to occur in front of children. Especially at a location meant to feel safe and center stability and learning. Since then, ICE continues to terrorize our communities by preying on their access to locations that should feel the safest.

Now, as ICE amps up operations in Maine, the urgency of LD 2106 is massive. This bill is about protecting children, families, and workers who serve at schools, hospitals, daycares, and libraries.

I recently learned that there are over 21,000 U.S. citizen children in Maine who have at least one parent who is not a citizen. Many of these families, despite being in the country legally and the parents having no criminal record, are at risk of getting horrifically and violently torn apart while trying to give their children the best life possible in Maine.

LD 2106 provides a straightforward and lawful step in the right direction. While the state of Maine cannot stop all immigration enforcement, it can limit the excessive nature of what we are seeing occur in our state by ensuring that community institutions won’t share immigration information about Maine residents unless they are required by law or provided a warrant.

Again, I respectfully urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 2106.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to protecting Maine’s families.