

Maile Sapp  
Orono, Maine  
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Dear Senator Tipping, Representative Osher, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Maile Sapp and I am of European heritage (third-generation immigrant) and a current resident of Orono, Maine (ancestral homelands of the Penobscot Nation and Wabanaki Tribal Nations). I am writing as an instructor at the University of Maine and a mental health clinician in training as a doctoral candidate in clinical psychology. These views are my own and not on behalf of the institutions I work for. I am writing in SUPPORT of LD 2106 being put forth before the committee today.

### **Protect Access to Services**

Working alongside individuals in my current professional roles I am witnessing escalating anxieties and fears from individuals to leave their homes since ICE's new operation in Maine. In turn, this limits their ability to access essential public services including healthcare and education.

LD 2106 will offer greater protection for individuals accessing basic needs and services (e.g., medical and mental health care, childcare, learning, warmth, and shelter).

### **Mental Health and Trauma Crisis**

The mental health of individuals is significantly impacted by ongoing mass immigration enforcement in our Maine communities and beyond. Notably, since ICE's new operation in Maine I am witnessing significant escalations in mental health symptoms and trauma responses from uncertainty, exposure to violence, and fear that is impacting their functioning in everyday life. Direct and indirect exposure to trauma and high stress not only have immediate devastating impacts, but long-lasting ones.

LD 2106 will contribute to addressing the mental health needs of individuals by offering greater protections for individuals to access care and safer places of community and support. It will bolster protective factors.

### **Community Sense of Belonging**

One of the greatest protective factors is one's sense of belonging. The sense of belonging is currently being violated and threatened by the current indiscriminate immigrant enforcement actions under the current administration. By providing protections to access services, move freely, and be in community spaces LD 2106 can PROMOTE sense of belonging. Noncitizen residents BELONG! The vibrance, beauty, and ENRICHMENT shared makes our Maine communities and beyond stronger.

Finally, as someone working in sensitive spaces clarity and guidance is needed from Maine about what to do if ICE shows up. LD 2106 can help me (and others) provide ESSENTIAL care to

my students, clients, and fellow community members so that education and public health services are available and ACCESSIBLE.

This law is urgently needed in our Maine communities. I urge you to support it!

Thank you,

**Maile Sapp, M.A., Ed.M., CMPC**

Orono, Maine