



Maine LD 2106: An Act to Prohibit the Disclosure of Nonpublic Records Without Proper Judicial Review

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Dear Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I regret that I am unable to attend the hearing for LD 2106 in person and greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the bill.

I serve as co-leader of the Maine chapter of the Scholars Strategy Network and am a resident of Hampden. The Scholars Strategy Network is a volunteer network of researchers and educators across the state who work to strengthen democracy and public policy by sharing clear, evidence-informed expertise with decision-makers and communities. Our chapter is part of a national network of nearly 2,000 members across 40 states and regions.

I offer this testimony based on my own professional experience and community engagement and do not speak on behalf of the University of Maine or the UMaine System.

I have lived and taught in Maine since 2011. In that time, I've had the privilege of teaching so many wonderful students from immigrant and refugee families — students who now dedicate themselves to their new home and making our country stronger, better, and more resilient. As I have watched the ongoing federal actions in our state over not just the past few weeks, but the last year, I think about those students.

I think about an honors engineering student who arrived from Iraq with limited English and, through extraordinary effort, graduated at the top of his class. He attended UMaine and was among the most driven and hard-working students I've ever known. His family attended his thesis defense, a proud and emotional moment. It was a recognition of belonging and achievement — exactly the kind of story we hope higher education makes possible. Students like him don't just earn degrees; they become an integral part of the American workforce and community life. I worry we will lose people like him if Maine is perceived as hostile or unsafe.

I think about international students who choose Maine because our educational opportunities are unimaginable in their home countries. Increasingly, they are questioning whether the United States— and Maine — is still a place they should come.

And I think about first- and second-generation students who fled violence, war, and instability elsewhere in the world. For these students, graduating college or getting into law school represents not just a perfunctory life achievement but the realization of the American dream. For them, these pathways are tangible and life-changing. We should be protecting those opportunities, not narrowing or closing them.

Policies that allow or encourage immigration enforcement at schools, hospitals, daycares, and libraries create widespread fear that keeps families from accessing essential services. Students miss school. People avoid medical care. Parents hesitate to go to work. These are not hypothetical harms; they are predictable consequences that we are already seeing in our communities.

They are also consequences Maine cannot afford. As one of the oldest states in the country, facing persistent workforce shortages, we depend on the contributions of newcomers. If we want Maine to grow and thrive, we must be known as a place where families of all points of origin feel safe putting down roots.

LD 2106 takes a measured and practical approach. It does not obstruct federal law enforcement. Instead, it provides clear guidance that sensitive community spaces should not become sites of immigration enforcement without a valid judicial warrant, and that workers should not be asked to voluntarily facilitate such actions without reasonable justification. This clarity protects children, families, public health, and the people who work in these institutions every day.

At its core, this bill is about something simple: ensuring that schools and universities remain places for learning, hospitals for healing, and libraries for community and connection — not fear. At this moment in our state's history, we must work to build relationships of trust and mutual belonging with our immigrant, refugee, and asylee communities.

At present, immigration actions in our communities are doing the opposite, creating an environment that forces these new Mainers to live in the shadows, or to go about their daily lives experiencing fear and vulnerability. This is a tragic and preventable mistake. For these reasons, I ask you and the members of the Judiciary Committee to vote "ought to pass" on LD 2106. Thank you.