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

Michael W. Howard, University of Maine

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

I am writing in support of LD 2106. I retired from the University of Maine in 2022, after teaching philosophy for 41 years, specializing in political philosophy. I have been following with great interest and concern the ICE violence in Minneapolis, and the indiscriminate rounding up of people legally in the country, including here in Maine, in order to fulfill an arbitrary quota, and not, as advertised, to deport violent criminals.

LD 2106 is a prudent step to rein in some of the worst abuses of this ICE campaign.

During my 41 years of teaching, I had many international students from Ukraine, Nicaragua, Serbia, India, and other countries. Some stayed in the country and have become citizens. Others have gone back to their country of origin enriched by their experience at UMaine. They enriched UMaine by their presence, bringing unique experiences and perspectives to classroom discussions. I have learned from them, as have the students in my classes. Until now, the campus was a safe place for foreign students. This bill will help to keep it a safe place for current students, faculty, and their families.

As my colleague Rob Glover put it, this bill

“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.”

Please vote “ought to pass” on LD 2106.

This testimony is my own opinion and does not represent the University of Maine.

Respectfully,

Michael Howard

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