



## Chapter Spotlight: Maine SSN Mobilizes Members to Testify on New State Restrictions for ICE

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Over the course of the last year, the Trump Administration's new immigration enforcement tactics have reverberated through communities across the country, often many miles from the border. While much of the focus was on cities like Minneapolis, Chicago, and Los Angeles, communities in Maine also found themselves facing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in their streets.

That's why Maine Representative Eleanor Sato (D - Gorham) introduced [LD 2106](#) at the beginning of the state's legislative session in January of 2026. In short, the law prevents ICE agents from targeting schools, hospitals, and other sensitive locations without a warrant. This returns immigration enforcement in Maine to the standard used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security since 2011, but which was changed under the second Trump administration.

After the legislation was introduced, State Rep. Ambureen Rana (D - Bangor)—a co-sponsor of the bill—reached out to Maine chapter co-leaders [Robert Glover](#) and [Jordan LaBouff](#), who are both faculty members at the University of Maine. Rep. Rana, a UMaine alumna, was one of Glover's students, and the two have maintained a strong connection since her graduation and subsequent election to the legislature. Knowing about Maine SSN, Rep. Rana asked if the chapter could rally researchers to submit evidence-based testimony about the impacts of ICE's extra-judicial targeting of public services and the importance of this new bill.

Maine SSN chapter leaders quickly worked with SSN's policy team to contact every member of the chapter with the opportunity to provide testimony. In just 72 hours, 20 scholars wrote, received feedback on, and then submitted testimony based on their research expertise and experience as educators in the state's public universities. Drawing on materials prepared by the [Immigration Legal Advocacy Project](#) (ILAP), Maine's only state-wide immigration legal services organization, members explained the fear, distrust, and exclusion that comes from immigration enforcement conducted without due process.

"Our members stepped into the public arena and helped translate their expertise and experience working closely with impacted communities into civic engagement and policy action," said Glover of the experience.

While Beverly Anne Wagner focused specifically on [workforce shortages](#), the rest [focused on K-12 classroom and higher ed issues](#). From absenteeism and learning deficits to declining international enrollment, members invoked both their research and their lived experiences as educators or parents. All in all, SSN members joined over 900 concerned Mainers in submitting testimony for the bill.

Maine SSN was able to solicit so many testimonies as quickly as it did because many members have been consistently learning about and practicing policy engagement for years. One of the oldest SSN chapters, with a robust membership spanning campuses and academic disciplines, the chapter has organized numerous SSN trainings over the years on how to communicate research in ways that are accessible to policymakers. Maine SSN is also connected to civic organizations like ILAP that have resources to help researchers inform specific policy decisions.

“We are lucky to have so many members who have experience with and connections to the legislature that make bringing their expertise to bear on policy a swift and smooth process,” reflected LaBouff.

In the end, the coalition that mobilized in support of the bill – including the Maine SSN chapter – was successful. LD 2106 passed in the legislature and Governor Mills flipped her previous position on the bill and signed it into law on April 23rd.

“Evidence-based policies like these help keep our communities safer, improve education, access to healthcare, and other public services,” said LaBouff. “Maine is a citizen legislature, and the relationships our members have with those citizen legislators are critical to our mission of supporting evidence-based policy in Maine.”