

**Submitter:** Austin Sumpter

**Committee:** House Committee on Health Care

**Measure, Appointment or Topic:** Support for House Bill 4079

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair Dobson, Vice-Chair McIntire, members of the House Committee on Education,

My name is Austin Sumpter. I live in the outskirts of Canby in rural Clackamas County, Oregon, specifically in Senate District 26 and House District 51. I testify today to express my support for House Bill 4079, a bill that will help protect students and their families concerning immigration raids at or near schools and other academic facilities.

The horrors of the mass deportation raids all over the country, including here in Oregon, have been all too harrowing and somber for many people to bear witness to, including me. It can be especially damaging for children who are just trying to live their lives, including going to school. We're now living in an age where a student can be present in class one day, actively engaged in the subject matter, only to go missing without a trace the next day. Public schools are supposed to be places of inclusion, learning, stability, and social interaction. Instead, they have now been turned into places of existential fear and life-long trauma. No part of this fear is abstract. Students are perpetually terrified that they may not see their parents come home, that a caregiver could disappear after dropping them off. Compounding this is the fact that the Trump regime has rescinded the "sensitive locations" memorandum, which had previously discouraged immigration enforcement in places like schools. It has come to where parents are now pulling their children out of schools entirely, no longer trusting that they're safe. This will harm us in the long run as fewer people will be able to get good jobs in the workforce without a robust education, not to mention the inhumanity of these raids in the first place.

This session provides the Legislature the opportunity to mitigate these harms with House Bill 4079, a component of the Legislature's Immigrant Justice Package. It's a simple package but a powerful one at that, empowering school boards and institutions of higher education to adopt policies for how they may respond if and when ICE or Border Patrol agents raid a school or college campus. While this may be insufficient at reversing the damages caused by the federal

government's mass deportation raids thus far, it will at the least provide necessary tools for schools to reduce the likelihood of future intrusions. With Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court refusing to hold the regime accountable on immigration raids, it's up to the states like Oregon to be the vanguard of civil rights. We owe it to the youth of today—no matter their race, ethnicity or country of origin—the ability to go to school, learn the fundamentals, and forge new bonds without the fear of their loved ones or themselves getting apprehended just for happening to look or sound a certain way. We were the first state to implement a sanctuary law back in 1987, and Oregonians today remain supportive of protecting immigrants. Please protect our schools by supporting this bill.