

Submitter: V E
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1570

To whom it may concern,

I work in behavioral health, and I am concerned as to how ICE actions will impact the care of my patients. There is already an overabundance of stigma surrounding mental health treatment, and I worry that there will be people that forgo life saving treatment out of concern that they could be taken by an organization that has chosen violence and anonymity to complete their agenda.

Patients who are brave enough to seek treatment should not have to live in fear that at any moment they could be removed from an environment that emphasizes safety, and potentially lose access to support, stabilizing medication, and education on symptom management, due to the color of their skin or their heritage.

Due to the stressful conditions ICE has cultivated, mental health treatment has become increasingly important.

There are also policies in place for safe interactions between law enforcement and those with mental illness. Another concern that arises are the weapons that law enforcement carries. Acutely psychotic or aggressive patients could attempt to take these weapons as a means of defending themselves, out of paranoia or due to prompting from internal stimuli. As ICE has proven countless times that they do not follow law enforcement guidelines, this could pose a detrimental safety risk. By storming a unit, they are creating the potential for countless people to be injured due to their oversight of the safety concerns with this population.

Thank you