

Submitter: Monica DeMasi
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1570

I am a family physician working in an urban underserved clinic in Portland. I have noticed a dramatic decline in our Spanish speaking patients coming into clinic. People are missing important care such as management of heart failure and diabetes and also prenatal care and childhood check-ups. I have had multiple patients tell me they are avoiding care due to fear of being detained or even just harassed by ICE. This includes a child with language delay missing speech therapy, elder siblings bringing kids to check-ups because parents are afraid to leave the home, and elderly patients missing important chronic disease management that prevents hospitalizations. In addition, I have seen an increase in anxiety and depression in my immigrant patients, including elementary aged children. I have also seen many teenagers having to miss school to work or do tasks previously taken on by adults who are now afraid to leave the home to work. I fear that the longer people miss out on primary care, the more likely they are to have serious complications of disease, or missed diagnoses that will increase ER visits, hospitalizations, and death.