

Submitter: Smitha Chadaga
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1570

Smitha R. Chadaga MD FHM FACP

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RE: Testimony in Support of SB 1570-1

To the Senate Health Care Committee:

My name is Smitha R Chadaga. I have been a hospital medicine physician for 23 years and have worked at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center for the last 13 years. During my career I have taken care of many incarcerated patients, including working in the jail unit of Denver Health Medical Center. We often provide care to patients jailed or incarcerated in the local or state law enforcement systems. And as such have the experience to compare those patient care encounters with encounters with those patients in federal law enforcement. The way in which ICE and affiliated federal agencies are now interacting with healthcare has had a chilling effect: patients may be avoiding necessary care simply for fear they will be detained by ICE. ICE is not run with the same vetting or safeguards as other law enforcement agencies. Detainees in ICE custody are not the same as those who have been arrested and/or incarcerated and in the custody of other law enforcement agencies. They have not gotten due process and indeed may be suffering from human rights abuses in ICE custody.

Given all of this Oregon must take action to help healthcare workers provide equitable care to those in federal immigration custody. We must be able to give know your rights information and have protections to do so freely. This is not legal information but rather public health information as ICE agents are in the streets harming and even killing civilians. Everyone has must know their rights and understand de-escalation techniques as a matter of public health. Additionally, all law enforcement and especially federal immigration law enforcement must have clear identification when in a healthcare setting especially when they are in plain clothes. Having law enforcement person easily identified when in healthcare setting helps make sure HIPPA is followed. Areas that are off limits to law enforcement must be clearly marked and these officers must be kept out of patient room when clinically indicated so as not to trample on front line healthcare workers ability to provide care and to respect patient's healthcare confidentiality.

Oregon is a great place to live and practice medicine. We need the state to act and hold healthcare systems accountable in the way in which they interact with federal law enforcement so healthcare workers can continue to provide excellent, equitable patient care and our communities can seek care without fear.

Thank you for the considering this testimony and I look forward to your support.

Smitha R Chadaga MD FHM FACP