

Submitter:

Rick Varnum

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1594

We have seen over the last year, particularly in Chicago and Minneapolis, many examples of federal immigration officials pushing boundaries and employing practices that in other times would not have been considered appropriate or lawful. Public agencies are faced with the challenge of how their members ought to act when encountering such federal agents.

Oregon public bodies find themselves having to reconcile federal immigration law and our state's own set of "sanctuary" laws. Most public servants are not lawyers. They need help and guidance regarding how to act appropriately and within the law when facing interactions with federal officials.

I am happy to see that this bill encourages all public agencies within the state to implement a set of policies, standards and procedures to aid employees navigate this new set of circumstances. I am even more pleased that the proposed legislation directs The Office of Immigration and Refugee Advancement to develop and maintain a model policy on which any state agency could base its own. This prevents each agency within the state from having to develop its own policy. It is an efficient use of the state's resources.

Many Oregon State agencies deal directly with the public. It is essential that they not only keep the public safe but are in a position to reassure them that policies and procedures are in place that will minimize risk should federal agents show up. This is particularly true in health care agencies and in our public schools, community colleges and universities. Young people deserve educational settings where they are free to concentrating on their learning rather than worrying about the possibility of ICE raids.

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, thank you for the work that you do on behalf of the people of Oregon. I urge you to vote in favor of moving this bill, SB 1594, out of committee and onto the senate floor where, hopefully, it will be passed into law.

Sincerely,

Rick Varnum