



Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs McIntire and Dobson, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4079. For the record, my name is Isa Peña and I am the Director of Strategy for Innovation Law Lab. Our organization is an Oregon-based nonprofit that leverages the power of the legal system, technology, and advocacy to support our state's immigrant and refugee populations.

People make Oregon their home because they dream of what we all want - to live safely, care for our families, and contribute to our communities. Many immigrant and refugee Oregonians have faced unimaginable circumstances and are fleeing religious persecution or political violence. And yet, they have made Oregon their home and are contributing to Oregon's economy and workforce. They are our friends, teachers, healthcare workers and neighbors.

For over three decades, this country's rules on immigration enforcement have protected sacred spaces where individuals access critical human services. These protections, upheld by both republicans and democrats alike, mirror the foundational American beliefs and laws that guarantee the free exercise of religion, defend the right to assembly, and safeguard the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Yet, on January 20th, 2025 the Department of Homeland Security abruptly and arbitrarily opened sensitive locations to immigration enforcement at the unfettered discretion of immigration agents, making it easier to detain individuals in former safe spaces and making it harder for immigrants of all status and their loved ones to access crucial services.

Oregonians have routinely, over the last few months been detained near many of these sacred spaces. Such enforcement action contributes to immigrants and refugees fearful of sending their children to school, to seek medical care, or join their community at cultural events.

HB 4079 calls for proactive and reactive communication expectations to keep everyone safe. It asks for consistent application and consistent communication so that all students, parents and staff regardless of which school they attend, are able to be safe and informed when something happens in their community. Such notifications are critical in the face of possible family separation.

This bill is part of the Immigrant Justice Package in the 2026 session - it aligns with Oregon's values to keep families safe and together. Innovation Law Lab strongly supports HB 4079, and we encourage the Legislature to pass this important bill.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isa Peña".

Isa Peña
Director of Strategy, Innovation Law Lab