

February 4th, 2026

Chair Hudson and all the members of the House Committee on Education

My name is Patricia Alvarado, I work at Adelante Mujeres and I live in Hillsboro. I am a grandmother of two students attending the Hillsboro School District.

Since Federal guidance designating schools as “sensitive areas” was rescinded in 2025, uncertainty, fear, and lack of attendance to school have increased. Our children and families of color, regardless of their immigration status, feel afraid to go to school.

We are asking children to be mentally prepared to learn new concepts when all they are worried about is their safety and the safety of their family. We are asking teachers to deliver outcomes when they have many children consecutively absent from school and the fear of ICE showing up at their school to take students.

Schools are hubs of learning, engagement and safety, and they must remain that way. Any time there is an incident involving law enforcement or unknown persons with access to weapons in or around school locations there must be clear process and communication among school staff.

As a grandmother, I support HB 4079 because I want my grandchildren and all children to feel safe at school. I am an educator and I know this is a difficult job especially when you don't have clear guidance on how to protect children in case of ICE presence in or around school.

The bill lays out proactive and reactive communication expectations to keep everyone safe. Consistent application and communication are needed 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. Oregonians know when we are informed, we can be stronger together.

I urge you to support these community-led policies to protect the freedoms of all Oregonians. Please support HB 4079.

Thank you for listening and for advocating for our children.

Patricia Alvarado
Director of Education Programs
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