

Submitter: Elisabeth Genly

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4079

Chair Hudson, Vice chairs Dobson and McIntyre and Members of the Committee,

I am Beth Genly, member of the Steering Committee of Indivisible Forest Grove, supporting House Bill 4079 and amendments. Technical difficulties precluded my giving oral testimony today, my apologies.

This January, Indivisible Forest Grove held 2 candlelight vigils on less than 24 hours' notice. The vigil in memory of Renee Nicole Good attracted 100 mourners; the one for Good and Alex Pretti attracted 200 mourners.

We see that ICE and CBP actions in Washington County are impacting the mental health and physical safety of students and their parents, teachers and staff. When students are afraid to come to school, or are distracted by fear for themselves or their families, learning and well-being suffer. Teachers tell us they are exhausting themselves offering daily safety watch patrols as students and parents travel to and from school. Many community members are joining them on these safety watch patrols.

News In the Grove reported on January 29th that, "In a mid-year update to the Forest Grove School Board, Superintendent Suzanne West said the district faced layoffs and that federal immigration enforcement is believed to be driving a spike in student withdrawals from the district." She indicated that "One hundred thirty-nine of the 207 student withdrawals are Latino."

"Even more than that," West said, "the fear and the stress and the anxiety that this is causing in our community, it does have an impact on students and staff in our schools."

Therefore, the Steering Committee of Indivisible Forest Grove strongly supports every effort to notify, support and protect children, teachers and staff of our schools from ICE actions. Therefore, we strongly support HB 4079-3.

Thank you.