

To: House Committee on Education

Subject: Support HB 4079 to Safeguard Students and Families

My name is Hector Gonzalez and I work for Latino Network as a Youth Engagement Specialist. I am writing in strong support of HB 4079 to safeguard students and families.

ICE activity in Portland areas has been very difficult to experience. Families are broken apart, students are left unbalanced, and a scar is left on the community. People should feel safe when they go to school, but they do not. Young individuals stopped participating in extra curricular activities and anxiety levels among teenagers have risen a lot.

About 30% of people at Lane Middle School identify as Latino or Hispanic. Within this group, there are children and families who are not fluent in English. They live in fear and do not fully understand communication systems or know how to use modern technology. They work long hours to provide food for their families, pay taxes so others can have affordable housing, and take their children to school so they can receive a decent education. All this work is destroyed when ICE folk intervene in what should be a safe and learning environment for everyone. Unfortunately, this has been the case for some schools in Portland, OR, so I urge you to protect the rights and freedoms of all Oregonians by passing HB 4079.

Sincerely,

Hector Gonzalez