

Submitter: Dana Bonifacio-Sample
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4079

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dana Bonifacio-Sample, and I am writing in strong support of the 2026 Immigrant Justice Package. I urge you to stand with immigrant Oregonians and vote yes on this critical set of protections for families, students, and communities across our state.

As a higher education leader in Oregon, I see firsthand how overzealous and aggressive immigration enforcement harms students — not only in our K–12 schools, but across our community colleges and universities. The fear created by violent ICE sweeps and heightened enforcement practices does not stay outside the classroom. It walks through the doors with our students every day.

Students who are immigrants themselves, who have undocumented family members, or who live in mixed-status households are experiencing profound stress and instability. Many have shared that they no longer feel safe traveling to and from campus. Some have stopped attending classes altogether. Others have withdrawn from student leadership roles, campus employment, clubs, cultural centers, and basic co-curricular activities that are proven to support retention and belonging. We are seeing students choose between showing up to class and protecting their family.

This fear has real academic and human consequences. Faculty and staff are reporting declining attendance, disengagement, and interrupted academic progress. Student support and counseling services are experiencing record levels of demand, with anxiety, trauma, and fear of family separation driving more students to seek mental health support than ever before. These are not abstract policy impacts — they are daily, lived realities for Oregon students.

At the same time, higher education — especially community colleges — is facing historic underfunding, staffing reductions, and resource constraints. Institutions are being asked to do more with less while supporting students who are navigating housing insecurity, food insecurity, mental health crises, and now, the constant fear of immigration enforcement disrupting their families and education. Students cannot learn, persist, or thrive when they are living in survival mode.

The 2026 Immigrant Justice Package offers meaningful protections that directly support student safety, stability, and success. Policies like safeguarding students and families, protecting against discrimination, ensuring access to healthcare and food,

preventing harmful data sharing, and providing legal representation are not just immigration issues — they are education issues, workforce issues, and public health issues. These measures help ensure students can remain enrolled, engaged, and hopeful about their futures.

Oregon has long prided itself on leading with dignity, fairness, and courage. Supporting the Immigrant Justice Package is about protecting families, upholding basic rights, and ensuring our schools, colleges, and communities remain places where people can live, learn, and contribute without fear.

I urge you to support the full 2026 Immigrant Justice Package and take action to protect immigrant Oregonians and our shared future.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to Oregon's students and families.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Bonifacio-Sample
Portland, Oregon