



Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 1594. 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.

Over the past many months, across our state we have faced numerous situations of federal immigration enforcement showing up at schools, clinics, community spaces, and other sites. Agencies across the board have responded in different ways to this increased presence of federal agents since no statewide standard of how to best respond has been created.

While existing Oregon law places limits on cooperation with federal immigration enforcement, the speed and intensity of current immigration enforcement efforts and other federal policy changes are straining current state systems.

SB 1594 would authorize the Department of Justice, in consultation with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA), to develop statewide administrative policies and protocols to guide best practices on the management of sensitive data. It also asks the Department of Administrative Services to ensure that frontline staff are prepared and feel supported in the event that immigration law enforcement arrives at a facility operated by a public body.

In 2021, we were proud to support the creation of the office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement and are thankful for the work the office has done to support our immigrant community. SB 1594 is a critical bill that will ensure state agencies have clear guidance on how to respond to challenging dynamics created by federal immigration enforcement. Innovation Law Lab urges your support of this important bill.

Sincerely,

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

Isa Peña  
Director of Strategy - Innovation Law Lab