

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1570

I am a pediatric hematologist, providing subspecialty care for patients and families with blood disorders across the state of Oregon. I am writing in support of SB 1570, to provide protection for patients and families in health care facilities to support access to healthcare for all. Like many healthcare workers, I was distraught when I read about Diana Crespo and her family when they were detained by ICE at the urgent care facility at Adventist Hospital. Diana's parents were bringing her to urgent care due to an hours long nosebleed. As a pediatric hematologist, her symptoms send two trains of thought into my head: 1) are they now acutely anemic, putting them at risk for organ dysfunction and death and 2) what is the cause of the nosebleeds? From a hematologists perspective, hours long nosebleeds are worrisome for acute thrombocytopenia - or low platelets. Acutely low platelets can be due to a few different things, but the most worrisome and urgent things are either an acute leukemia or immune thrombocytopenia. Both conditions can be life-threatening - and life-ending - without appropriate evaluation and treatment. I do not know if Diana received medical attention when she was transported to a detention center, but I have thought of her every day since - hoping that this was just a winter-time nosebleed and not a sign of an underlying illness that requires further evaluation and treatment.

Patients and families are telling me that they are avoiding medical appointments due to fear of interactions with ICE agents at medical facilities. They have told me that they are avoiding certain medical facilities due to known ICE activities - either resulting in longer trips to other facilities and more missed school or work or in not getting the care they need at all. Families supporting their children through intensive therapies are afraid of being deported and don't know what will happen to their child. Medical facilities should be a safe place - where we can provide care to anyone who needs us. Current ICE practices are inhibiting the care we provide.