



Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 1538. 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.

Nearly 55,000 U.S. citizen children in Oregon live with an undocumented family member, and thousands more immigrant children face the same challenge. When a parent or caregiver is detained, these kids face immediate crisis: lost income, eviction, hunger—on top of the trauma of separation. And right now, almost 1.6 million Oregonians are currently living under a declared state of emergency because of the massive due process violations by federal DHS agents.

Several months ago, we saw the federal government rescind a policy which protected sensitive places like hospitals, schools and places of worship from immigration enforcement. While schools and other sensitive locations have historically been off-limits for immigration enforcement, the rescinding of these protections has allowed for children and their families to be targeted in places they should feel safe.

Innovation Law Lab is proud to have filed litigation in federal court against the rollback of prior protections governing sensitive locations. While this litigation is ongoing, we are proud to support bills like SB 1538 and HB 4079 that would provide an additional layer of support and protection for students and their families.

Our organization is proud to stand with the champions of this legislation and the community-based organizations supporting it. We appreciate the ongoing work of the Legislature this session to support immigrant communities across our state, and we look forward to continuing to work with the champions of this legislation to advance protections for our friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

Innovation Law Lab urges your support of SB 1538.

Sincerely,

Isa Peña
Director of Strategy - Innovation Law Lab