



*Testimony in Support of HB 4079 (2026)- Safeguarding Students and Families*

Dear Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Education committee,

My name is Kate Suisman. I am an attorney at the Northwest Workers' Justice Project (NWJP). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill. We represent workers in low-wage jobs when bad things happen to them at work: when they are not paid, or are discriminated against for being in a protected class or are retaliated against for speaking up. Finally, we engage in policy advocacy and try to bring the important perspectives of workers in low-wage jobs and immigrant workers to these policy discussions.

It goes without saying that the level of fear in immigrant and non-immigrant communities alike is higher than it has ever been due to extremely aggressive and indiscriminate immigration enforcement. In the past, we have at least felt comfortable in certain places- churches, hospitals, schools, courts. But nothing feels safe when laws and norms are not being followed by our federal government, nor when violence is being inflicted on people of all ages, races, national origins and immigration statuses.

As a state, let's do everything we can to set things back to some sort of normalcy. Since the federal sensitive locations guidance was rescinded last year, we have seen targeting of people at all the places that used to be considered "sensitive" and therefore not appropriate for immigration enforcement- schools around the state, hospitals in Portland, and more.

Because of this indiscriminate and violent enforcement, many of NWJP's clients and the larger client community are afraid to live their lives, including going to school and dropping family members off at school. Schools are for learning. They are places for communities to gather. HB 4079 will do what is legally allowed to protect the basic right we all have to educate ourselves and our children.

The bill sets up common-sense response systems for schools when immigration enforcement is present on campuses. It requires designation of an administrator at each school to respond to immigration enforcement, and requires schools including higher education institutions to notify families and the larger community of any such enforcement.

While Oregon cannot fully stop this lawless, unconstitutional use of force against people, we can at least give community members some assurance that they will at least be notified if immigration enforcement enters school property.

HB 4079 is part of the 2026 Immigrant Justice Package and is backed by a broad coalition of immigrant justice advocates, civil liberties groups, unions, and community based organizations. I urge you to support these community-led policies to protect the freedoms of all Oregonians.

Thank you sincerely.