

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire and members of the House Education Committee

Students are afraid, not only because of the state of our world politically, but also because those in power refuse to take a stance. You can claim to be against ICE, but without concrete actions, you are on the side of the oppressor. The fear students feel from a possible ICE interaction can't be changed, but can be lessened if you support HB 4079. It is easy to make claims, and harder to take action, but without action, positive change will not occur.

As a student at the University of Oregon, I see the fear and confusion felt by students as they grapple with the thought and threat of ICE on campus. Unfortunately, HB 4079 wouldn't prevent ICE from entering our campuses, but would provide a warning system for students, adding a level of comfort in a trying time. All students deserve to feel safe on campus, and having unified policies in place for when ICE enters colleges and universities allows these third spaces to act as true centers of safety. We are not asking for direct prevention, instead we are asking those in power to prioritize the safety of those who are the most vulnerable.

Personally, coming from a family of immigrants, the trauma and fear associated with ICE interactions can be overwhelming. Investing in HB 4079 doesn't take away this fear but allows students and faculty to feel as prepared as possible despite being in a traumatic situation. We are failing our students and faculty, who are the backbone of this country, by leaving them unprepared and vulnerable. ICE is unpredictable, but what we can control is how prepared we are for their arrival. Do not be part of the problem because you fear being associated with the solution. You have been given the power to help those who cannot help themselves. Use your power to support HB 4079.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Chase Merrill  
University of Oregon Freshman