

Submitter: Harper Haverkamp
On Behalf Of: AFT-Oregon
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4138

To the House Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing on behalf of AFT-Oregon. We are a labor federation representing workplace unions across the state in early learning, K-12 schools, and across our state's college and university landscape. Our 28 unions represent over 18,000 essential staff, instructors, faculty, and employees who support our students and advocate for the public good. AFT-Oregon urges lawmakers to lead in this moment against the assault on our communities from unbadged, masked, armed Federal agents from Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE). We are in support of HB 4138 and urge its passage.

ICE agents across our state have been wearing face coverings such as medical masks or balaclavas that conceal their operations, identity, and validity. The Department of Homeland Security claims this is necessary, but it deeply undermines transparency and accountability. If ICE agents are serving to benefit the public - they would have no issue with public identification.

When agents are visible, it enhances accountability and oversight. It will allow for a better investigation of unlawful and inappropriate conduct. It would bridge the enormous divide between the public trust and ICE, who by many are perceived as waging an unconstitutional campaign of terror on our communities. It would defer potential abuse and impersonation - how is anyone to know if these are legitimate potential officers without being identifiable?

The fear in schools, college campuses, and across our student bodies is profound. Every single thing we can do to promote safer, more stable learning environments is in our union's interest.

In this moment, it is necessary for Oregon to center our democratic values and consistency between local, state, and Federal agents whenever possible. We support HB 4138 and urge its passage.

Thank you,

Harper Haverkamp, Ph.D.
AFT-Oregon