

Submitter: Lizzie Allen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1570

To the Senate Health Care Committee:

I am a patient writing in support of this bill. As someone living with multiple chronic health conditions, I know how important it is for people to have timely access to healthcare. All people, regardless of immigration status, deserve to be safe and respected in healthcare facilities. No one should be in the position of trying to decide between seeking essential healthcare and staying away to protect their safety. Navigating the healthcare system and surviving with chronic health conditions is hard enough without fearing ICE activity in the hospital.

However, I am not writing this testimony solely because I am concerned for immigrant communities (which I am), but also because if ICE agents are not held accountable to specific standards in healthcare settings, they will threaten the care and safety of all patients. If nurses, doctors, medical assistants, and other healthcare professionals are trying to navigate confusing and threatening behavior from ICE, it will affect the care all patients receive.

We already ask so much of healthcare workers; we have to ensure that they are protected in their workplace, and that federal officers are required to follow the same standards as state and local law enforcement.

If we continue to allow federal officers to behave without recourse in our hospitals, we will be betraying immigrant communities and healthcare workers, and jeopardizing the safety and quality of care for all Oregonians.