

Submitter: L Fletcher Christie  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1570  
L. Fletcher Christie

February 10, 2026

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 1570-1

To the Senate Health Care Committee:

I am an acute care physical therapist at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center. I am writing in support of SB 1570-1 to provide better protection to hospital patients and employees in our state. Over the last year, I have seen my hospital administrators demonstrate increasing complicity in their stance towards ICE presence on campus. After the executive order last year declaring that hospitals would no longer be off limits to immigration enforcement, we initially received emails reassuring us that many protocols were in place to protect immigrant patients. We were told that the majority of the spaces in the hospital are private and therefore inaccessible to ICE. Above all, they said, HIPAA would be an important tool to safeguard the privacy and wellbeing of our patients and families. Yet as the ICE surge hit our region last fall, the administration's strong language began to shift. This change in tone was particularly apparent with regards to the treatment of patients who are already in ICE custody. If officers arrive in plain clothes and with no visible display of identification, Legacy will issue them a badge that says "law enforcement." If nurses are providing sensitive patient care, ICE officers can simply refuse to leave. Legacy does not allow providers or nurses to call patients' family members to alert them that their loved one is receiving care at our hospital. And we were explicitly told not to provide "Know Your Rights" information to patients because "it could be construed as legal advice."

A coalition of nurses and other healthcare workers organized at our hospital to pressure Legacy administrators to improve their policies and protocols. With UCSF as a model, a letter was drafted that proposed several best practice principles that provided better protections for patients while also remaining in line with federal immigration law. The letter was signed by hundreds of nurses, hospitalists and allied health professionals. Many of our managers also forwarded the letter with messages of support. ONA issued a press release reiterating concerns from directly facing staff. However despite the groundswell of support for change, the advocacy has fallen on deaf ears, resulting only in a cease and desist letter to ONA from Legacy lawyers. Senior leadership at Emanuel has shown no willingness to listen to their employees and has only doubled down on the current ICE policy. Moreover, when a nurse

attempted to give "Know Your Rights" cards to the charge nurse of the Emergency Department, she was put on administrative leave and ultimately felt forced to resign.

Given the lack of institutional will to do what's right for patients, families and employees, I believe that state legislation is necessary to establish necessary safeguards during this unprecedented time in our history. Anecdotally, our hospital is not currently seeing the same high numbers of patients in ICE custody that we saw last October. But given how ICE funding was dramatically increased last year, I believe it is only a matter of time before we see the next big surge. Furthermore, I am concerned not only for patient privacy but also worker safety. Our hospital employs hundreds of immigrant workers in many different departments. Without stronger protections, we may see a day in Oregon when ICE officers feel entitled to come into all areas of the hospital, harassing employees to show their legal documents, as has occurred in Minnesota.

Protecting the people who work, visit or receive care at the hospital is not just morally right, but also of benefit to our public health. Please preserve the sanctity of our health institutions by considering this testimony. Thank you, I look forward to your support.

L. Fletcher Christie