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To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: SCIJ Written Testimony

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Dear Mr. DiMezza,

I hope you're doing well! I'm writing to you today on behalf of The Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice (SCIJ) with written testimony expressing my support for legislation that would protect Rhode Island's immigrant community. Specifically, I support H-7436, S-2278, which would prohibit municipalities from entering contracts with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and would require the Wyatt Detention Center to terminate its current contract with ICE. Additionally, I support bill H-7198, S-2047, which would reduce potential prison sentences for misdemeanors by one day, bill H-7360, S-2045, which would preserve the integrity of the American legal system by preventing civil arrests in court, bill H-7202, which would further enforce the integrity of American law by allowing immigrants to sue ICE agents, bill H-7211, which would help law enforcement fulfill their mandate of protecting the community by disallowing the use of masks, and bill H-8140, which limits the use of state resources to assist ICE.

Empirically, law enforcement has been at its most effective when officers have a meaningful relationship with the community they are sworn to protect. However, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has contravened the law and their duty by terrorizing Rhode Island's immigrant community, making effective law enforcement practically impossible. As a student, I've seen firsthand how my community has been enriched by the presence of immigrants, and how ICE's presence in Rhode Island has endangered their lives and ability to contribute to Rhode Island. Further, as a descendant of immigrants, I, too, experience the harms of American immigration policy: my grandmother, who was born in a Japanese internment camp, spent years trying to find and reconnect with her family, and, to this day, struggles to connect to her own heritage.

There is no positive end to empowering and cooperating with ICE. I urge you to consider those aforementioned bills to prohibit contracts with and support for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to protect our community and legal system, and to ensure a positive future for Rhode Island.