

Dear Distinguished Members of the Committee,

I am writing as a concerned community member urging my state rep, Ms. Edith Ajello, to support the following proposed bills by Senator Lombardi:

- H8328 and H8347

H8328 would allow all RI courts to conduct hearings and proceedings remotely using technology like telephone or video conferencing. This is a crucial and essential step towards protecting the bulk of immigrant community members that make up your represented district. As a volunteer for the Deportation Defense Line, I have seen and heard of too many of our neighbors being kidnapped after their court hearings. This virtual option is nothing new. We have the infrastructure for it as evident during the COVID-19 Pandemic when we offered it. These virtual hearings offer the layer of protection so many of our community members have been calling for, especially now.

This is your opportunity to face off the oppressive entities and agencies that are kidnapping our neighbors off the streets.

H8347 would prohibit local law enforcement from voluntarily cooperating with federal civil immigration enforcement. Providence police pride themselves in being vigilant. It is time to apply that energy towards the protection of our neighbors against federal agents who mask themselves as local law enforcement and everyday Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Saludos,