

House Judiciary Committee  
Chair, Representative Carol Hagan McEntee  
CC: Clerk, Roberta DiMezza  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Testimony in support of H8347 and H8328**

Dear Distinguished Members of the Committee,

My name is Jasmina de León Gill, and I am the Lead Community Organizer at the Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice (SCIJ). On behalf of SCIJ, I am writing to express our strong support for the bills *Restrictions on State and Municipal Cooperation with Civil Immigration Enforcement (H8347)* and *Permitting Virtual or Remote Court Hearings (H8328)*.

These bills offer us a different path, one rooted in safety, and care. They move us closer to building the kind of community we all deserve, and the kind we still have the power to create. A community where people do not live in constant fear, where families are not forced to choose between survival and safety, and where stepping outside your home does not come with the risk of detention or separation.

Across Rhode Island, immigrant community members are making impossible decisions every day by missing medical appointments, skipping work, and keeping children home from school. The fear of immigration enforcement is ever-present. When local and state resources are entangled with federal immigration enforcement, that fear is amplified, eroding trust in public institutions and isolating the very communities that need support the most.

**H8347** is a critical step toward ensuring that our state resources are used to serve and protect our communities, not to fuel a system that causes harm and instability. It allows Rhode Island to affirm that our public institutions exist to build trust, not fear.

ICE is not only a threat to immigrant communities, it is a threat to public safety as a whole. Across the country, immigration enforcement actions have led to dangerous vehicle pursuits, crashes, and injuries to community members. In some cases, ICE agents have engaged in reckless driving through residential neighborhoods, putting families and bystanders at risk. In others, community members have reported being chased, rammed, or forced into dangerous situations simply for trying to get home safely. Even here in Providence, ICE agents have been involved in vehicle-related incidents that raise serious concerns about safety in our own neighborhoods.

**H8328** is equally important. Access to virtual or remote court hearings can be the difference between someone being able to exercise their legal rights or being forced to miss a hearing altogether due to fear, transportation barriers, or work constraints. Expanding these options increases access to justice and acknowledges the real barriers many people face. We already

know it's possible to achieve after the many remote hearings that took place during the peak of COVID. Our immigrant loved ones deserve to reach justice without being in constant fear.

Together, these bills recognize the humanity of our neighbors and affirm that safety and access should not be conditional.

We are at a moment where we must decide what kind of state we want to be. Passing these bills is a step toward choosing compassion over cruelty, community over fear, and justice over exclusion.

I urge you to support **H8347** and **H8328**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Jasmina de León Gill  
Lead Community Organizer  
Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice (SCIJ)