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From: Raya Gupta <rayaguptadc@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 10:40 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB8328

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Dear House Judiciary,

I am writing in support of HB8328. I have seen ICE kidnap multiple people from Garrahy and Superior Courthouses this year. No one should have to fear going to court because they might never see their family again or die in ICE detention. That is unacceptable. We know that the infrastructure for virtual courts exists from when it was used during COVID 19 to make sure people don't have to choose between going to court and their safety.

On Tuesday of this week, ICE came to the Cranston Municipal courthouse to try and kidnap a community member. Two weeks ago, they came to the Garrahy courthouse 4 times in one week. We have seen ICE enter the courthouse chasing after people and injuring them, kidnapping teenage court interns, and kidnapping people right outside their homes while they're on the way to court. Courthouses will never be accessible if community members must constantly risk deportation to leave their house. The new form that Chief Justice Suttel introduced is not sufficient—all of these sightings as well as several kidnappings have occurred after that form was introduced.

Rhode Islanders want virtual court hearings! More than 3,500 people have signed the petition for virtual court hearings. Every day that passes, more immigrant members of our community are being kidnapped at court. These are our fathers, mothers, classmates, neighbors, essential workers, tax payers, and friends.

Virtual courts is just the first step. There have been over a year of brutal, horrific and very public courthouse kidnappings. The proposed law would be a significant improvement in protecting our state's residents, but it's not enough! I urge the state of Rhode Island to do everything in its power to stop ICE from terrorizing our neighborhoods, and to make sure that all of our state institutions - not just our courthouses - are not helping ICE destroy our state. Please take the first step by passing HB8328.

Sincerely,

Raya Gupta,