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Dear President Trump:

On behalf the AFT—a union representing 1.8 million people working in education, healthcare and public services—I am writing to request that you please reverse the directive of Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Benjamine Huffman to allow U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to conduct raids in our nation’s schools and hospitals.

The AFT agrees that our immigration system is broken and badly in need of reform. While we have deep concerns about a mass deportation program that poses great risk to families and our nation’s economic stability, this directive for ICE agents to disregard “sensitive” areas poses an immediate threat to the well-being of all our children and our communities.

Schools and hospitals have been designated sensitive areas because they are places where safety and security are paramount. Schools must build relationships of trust with families who send their precious children there to learn and thrive. Hospitals provide healthcare to people needing medical attention during vulnerable moments of their lives, when they are injured or ill, expecting to give birth or visiting a loved one. These are critical institutions in a functioning society. Both must be safe and welcoming places to serve the best interests of the community and our nation; their success is what makes this nation great.

The acting secretary’s directive to change long-standing federal policy is cruel and counterproductive. It will create havoc in places where families put their trust. Permitting law enforcement to conduct raids on school grounds or in hospitals and clinics, potentially forcibly removing people in front of children, will break trust between families, law enforcement and your administration, as children will be traumatized by the spectacle. This will indelibly scar native-born American families as well as immigrant families; the impact and harms will be absorbed by entire communities.

As educators, parents, healthcare workers and American citizens, we have a responsibility to the communities we serve. We don’t question whether students or patients come from an immigrant family. That’s not our job. Our job is to teach and to heal.

To that end we are writing today asking you to step in and rescind this new policy while continuing to press for immigration reforms that make sense and share bipartisan support.

Sincerely,



Randi Weingarten