



April 2026

To: House Judiciary Committee

Re: AAUW Supports **SB25-005**-Rights Violation in Immigration Enforcement Remedy

Dear Committee Members,

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than 700 community leaders are members of AAUW branches around Colorado.

We are an organization that promotes justice, human rights, sustainable workforce, and mutual security for all people. We support the constitutional protection of all individuals by cultivating a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. In our multicultural society we support the civil and human rights of all immigrants, including a fair and just path to legal status.

AAUW-American Association of University Women of Colorado strongly supports SB-005 because this bill will further our efforts toward fair treatment of immigrants to America. We request a YES vote in committee and throughout the process of becoming law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hon. Su Ryden
AAUW of Colorado Advocacy-Director

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American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

House Judiciary

04/22/2026

SB26-005 Rights Violation in Immigration Enforcement Remedy

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
France Kirkjaffe For themselves	I think this bill should be passed to create a pathway for those who violate the US constitution during immigration enforcement to be held accountable for their actions.
Shane McDonnell For themselves	<p>I support Colorado SB26-005 because no one, regardless of immigration status, should be left without legal recourse when their constitutional rights are violated.</p> <p>This bill creates a cause of action for individuals injured during a civil immigration enforcement action by someone who violates the U.S. Constitution while participating in that enforcement, making them liable for legal or equitable relief.</p> <p>The need for this legislation is real and urgent. ICE operations across the country have repeatedly shown federal agents using force in ways that critics argue violate citizens' constitutional rights, and the training period for agents has been significantly reduced over the past year. Colorado must not stand by while its residents are left without a meaningful path to justice.</p> <p>This bill stands for the basic principle that government agents must follow the law like everyone else, and that there should be legal remedies when constitutional rights are violated. State courts have a long and legitimate role in adjudicating claims of federal constitutional violations, and SB26-005 simply ensures that role is preserved and accessible.</p>

	<p>I urge my fellow Coloradans and legislators to support this bill. Accountability under the law is not a partisan issue. It is a foundational American value.</p>
Stan Gelb For themselves	<p>This bill provides necessary accountability and legal recourse for individuals whose constitutional rights are violated during immigration enforcement, filling a gap left by recent federal court decisions. Vote YES!</p>
Virginia GEBHART For themselves	<p>Please vote yes to restore the ability of Coloradans to hold bad actors in ICE and US Border Patrol accountable under the law. It is horrifying to know that these undertrained, overly aggressive and out of control goons think they are above the law and act accordingly. This chaos, cruelty and corruption must not go unchecked in our communities. Please vote yes to restore our ability to hold bad actors accountable when innocent people are harmed.</p>

House Judiciary

04/22/2026 01:30 PM

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France Kirkjaffe For themselves	I think this bill should be passed to create a pathway for those who violate the US constitution during immigration enforcement to be held accountable for their actions.
Virginia GEBHART For themselves	Please vote yes to restore the ability of Coloradans to hold bad actors in ICE and US Border Patrol accountable under the law. It is horrifying to know that these undertrained, overly aggressive and out of control goons think they are above the law and act accordingly. This chaos, cruelty and corruption must not go unchecked in our communities. Please vote yes to restore our ability to hold bad actors accountable when innocent people are harmed.
Stan Gelb For themselves	This bill provides necessary accountability and legal recourse for individuals whose constitutional rights are violated during immigration enforcement, filling a gap left by recent federal court decisions. Vote YES!
Shane McDonnell For themselves	I support Colorado SB26-005 because no one, regardless of immigration status, should be left without legal recourse when their constitutional rights are violated. This bill creates a cause of action for individuals injured during a civil immigration enforcement action by someone who violates the U.S. Constitution while participating in that enforcement, making them liable for legal or equitable relief.

	<p>The need for this legislation is real and urgent. ICE operations across the country have repeatedly shown federal agents using force in ways that critics argue violate citizens' constitutional rights, and the training period for agents has been significantly reduced over the past year. Colorado must not stand by while its residents are left without a meaningful path to justice.</p> <p>This bill stands for the basic principle that government agents must follow the law like everyone else, and that there should be legal remedies when constitutional rights are violated. State courts have a long and legitimate role in adjudicating claims of federal constitutional violations, and SB26-005 simply ensures that role is preserved and accessible.</p> <p>I urge my fellow Coloradans and legislators to support this bill. Accountability under the law is not a partisan issue. It is a foundational American value.</p>
<p>Brenda Ramirez For themselves</p>	<p>Statement</p> <p>I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 26-005 to share what happened to me, and to ask this Committee to make sure it cannot happen to anyone else.</p> <p>I called 911 because my teenage daughter was missing. I was the one who needed help. Instead, I was arrested.</p> <p>I am a single mother. My youngest child is two years old and has serious medical needs. I had a pending U visa application, a visa created by Congress for survivors of domestic violence who cooperate with law enforcement. The Garfield County Sheriff's Office knew all of this. None of it mattered.</p> <p>I was betrayed by the Garfield County Sheriff. After I posted bond, they gave me my clothes and told me to change. They made me</p>

	<p>believe I would be released. I went into the bathroom and dressed quickly, my heart full, excited to hold my child. But when I walked out of the bathroom, my heart broke. A police officer was standing next to an immigration agent, who took me out the back door while my son and my friend waited for me out front. I never got to say goodbye.</p> <p>I was held in a freezing cell inside an office building, a building with no certificate of occupancy, a building that had never received a fire inspection. I was then transferred to a private detention facility. After that, I was deported to Mexico without any notice to my children and without any notice to my attorney. My baby was in the care of a friend who did not know how to manage his medical needs.</p> <p>They knew I had a pending U visa application. They knew I was a single mother with a young child with health problems. The law did not matter. My rights did not matter. Nothing mattered. No one defended me then.</p> <p>I was deported, but I am still here. I am still speaking. What happened to me was not an accident. It was a choice made by people who knew exactly who I was and chose to act anyway. They treated me as if I had no rights, as if justice was never meant for someone like me. This bill does not give me back what I lost, but it tells the next family that the law is on their side. My children are still waiting. Pass this bill so that no other mother has to learn that lesson the way I did.</p>
<p>Elsa Alcala For themselves</p>	<p>My name is Elsa Alcala. On April 22, I appeared in person at the committee hearing in room 271, but I had to leave before this bill was called.</p> <p>I am here on behalf of myself. I am a U.S. citizen who is a registered Democrat, and I have lived in Fort Collins for six years.</p>

	<p>I am also currently a 30-plus years licensed attorney in Texas, and a former criminal and appellate judge who served in that capacity in Texas for 20 years.</p> <p>I am for SB 26-005 for at least three reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As a Latina, I want to be clear about saying that, based on what I have seen throughout the U.S., ICE and CBP are out of control. Too many agents are using excessive violence and violating people’s constitutional rights. My anxiety is higher because I do not trust that the federal government will follow the law if I encounter them. Their behavior is unacceptable, and it is not how people should be treated in the U.S. This bill helps protect people like me.2. There are no valid reasons to allow ICE and CBP agents to have immunity if they violate the United States Constitution. Violating federal constitutional rights of U.S. citizens has never been and can never be a “necessary and proper” part of their roles as agents.3. The bill is not overly broad. It provides for protections to ICE and CBP agents by allowing courts to award them attorneys fees if people file frivolous actions.
<p>Bennett Rutledge Amend themselves</p>	<p>Chair Maybrey, Major Clifford, other members of the committee, good afternoon.</p> <p>The Supremacy Clause of the Constitution of the United States (Article 6, Paragraph 2) has been getting a lot of air time lately, including, today, in Senate Bill 26-005, page 5, line 14, in the phrase "supremacy clause immunity". I wish to point out that this Supremacy Clause, as written:</p> <p>This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all</p>

	<p>Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.</p> <p>mentions nothing about immunity for any government officials, but rather makes "Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof;" part the supreme Law of the Land, over any policy, regulation, Executive Order, or any other pontification coming out of Fantasyland on the Potomac, or any other Capital in the USA, notwithstanding.</p> <p>Okay, maybe I'm being pedantic. Maybe that phrase about supremacy clause immunity is needed in Senate Bill 26-005, to spell it out to the lawyerish federal functionaries who's favored narrative wants the supremacy clause to mean immunity ... for them and their buddies. Let me just generalize my request: as you amend Senate Bill 26-005, to make it clear that this bill exists to implement Colorado's (and each of the several State's) Fourteenth Amendment duty:</p> <p>No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.</p> <p>and specifically, to keep crystal clear that this protection of the laws is not just for immigrants, and extends to those, like Denver-born Brian Morales, taken and exiled (NOT deported) by Homeland Security enforcement officers earlier this month, who may LOOK "illegal" but are citizens who DO have immunities, whether their citizenship is rooted in the Secession Treaty associated with the Louisiana Purchase, the Treaty of Guadalupe-</p>
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	<p>Hidalgo which ended the Mexican War, or the multitude of treaties with First Nations peoples.</p> <p>Vote yes on SB26-005 Rights Violation in Immigration Enforcement Remedy</p>
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WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB26-005

Rights Violation in Immigration Enforcement Remedy

Colorado House Judiciary Committee | April 22, 2026

Chair and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Hannah Ramsey, and I am a resident of Colorado Springs, Colorado. I am submitting this written testimony in strong support of SB26-005, the Rights Violation in Immigration Enforcement Remedy. This bill rests on a principle that should be uncontroversial in a constitutional democracy: that no person, regardless of their uniform or agency affiliation, is above accountability under the law.

The Fear in Our Communities Is Real and Measurable

Across Colorado, fear is reshaping daily life - not because people are doing anything wrong, but because they have witnessed or heard firsthand accounts of federal immigration enforcement that is violent, indiscriminate, and operating without meaningful accountability. Law-abiding Coloradans, people who pay taxes, send their children to school, run businesses, and contribute to our communities are afraid to leave their homes. They are avoiding public spaces, limiting economic activity, and withdrawing from civic life, not because they broke the law, but because they cannot be certain the law will protect them.

This fear is not abstract. It has tangible consequences for public health, economic participation, and community cohesion. When people are afraid to interact with their city, their economy, and one another, entire communities suffer, including communities that have no direct connection to immigration enforcement whatsoever.

Minnesota Demonstrates What Happens Without a State Remedy

The situation in Minneapolis offers a direct and sobering preview of what inadequate accountability looks like in practice. Beginning in December 2025, Operation Metro Surge deployed more than 3,000 armed federal agents into the Twin Cities. In the weeks that followed, two U.S. citizens were shot and killed by ICE agents in separate incidents. Countless others were detained without probable cause, pepper-sprayed while exercising First Amendment rights, illegally pulled over by unmarked cars or subjected to what federal courts themselves described as racially-motivated stops.

The consequences extended far beyond individual encounters. Customer-facing businesses in Minneapolis reported revenue losses of 50 to 80 percent as communities became too afraid to leave their homes. Schools were forced into lockdown. Local police accumulated over 3,000 hours of overtime in just days - costing taxpayers more than \$2 million, simply to manage the chaos generated by poorly supervised federal agents.

Minnesota's response has been to pursue relief through federal court with the state attorney general, the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the ACLU, and dozens of individual plaintiffs have all filed suit. Yet as of this hearing, months later, not a single injunction has been granted and no settlement reached. A federal judge acknowledged the "profound and even heartbreaking consequences" of the operation on Minnesotans, and still denied emergency relief. This is what it looks like when there is no accessible state-level remedy. Colorado has the opportunity to act now, before we find ourselves in that position.

Colorado Is Not Alone. This Is a National Movement to Close a Legal Gap

SB26-005 is not a radical outlier. It is part of a nationwide, bipartisan legal recognition that a serious gap in accountability exists. And that states have both the authority and the responsibility to close it. As the ACLU has noted, nine states including Colorado, New York, Vermont, and Wisconsin are currently considering bills of this kind. Colorado has an opportunity to be among the leaders.

The core legal problem these bills address is straightforward: under existing federal civil rights law — 42 U.S.C. § 1983 — people can sue state and local officers who violate their constitutional rights. But that law has never applied to federal officers. The alternative, a federal cause of action known as a Bivens suit, has been so severely restricted by the courts in recent years that it offers virtually no practical remedy. The result is a two-tiered system of justice where your ability to seek accountability depends not on whether your rights were violated, but on what badge the officer was wearing when they violated them. (or in ICE's case, not wearing a badge or any identifier to verify they are law enforcement, but I digress)

Illinois acted first, passing the first state law of this kind in late 2025. Governor JB Pritzker signed it with a statement that echoes exactly what this committee should hear today: "No one, and I mean no one, is above the law, especially those wearing a badge representing the law." The Trump administration immediately sued to block it - just as they sued Illinois over its sanctuary policies in 2025, a case the federal government lost when a federal judge dismissed the suit. The pattern is clear: the federal government will challenge state accountability measures, and states that hold firm are winning.

Meanwhile, Maine and California already have "converse-1983" laws on the books, these are laws that authorize damages against federal officials who deprive people of their constitutional rights. A case is now actively proceeding in Maine, brought by a civil engineer who was detained without cause during an immigration raid, who is suing an ICE agent by name under that state's existing law. That case is being closely watched as a test of exactly the legal theory that SB26-005 would codify in Colorado.

In 2023, a federal judge, a conservative Trump appointee, wrote that the Supreme Court has never closed off the route of states empowering plaintiffs to directly allege federal constitutional violations against federal officials, and that Congress has not precluded

laws of this kind. Colorado's SB26-005 is on solid legal footing, and it stands with a growing number of states that have reached the same conclusion.

This Bill Is About Accountability - Nothing More

Opponents of SB26-005 have argued that it will invite frivolous lawsuits and discourage agents from doing their jobs. This argument deserves a direct response: agents who follow the Constitution have nothing to fear from this bill. The cause of action it creates is tied explicitly to violations of constitutional rights. An agent who conducts lawful immigration enforcement is not exposed to liability. The only people who should fear accountability are those acting outside the law - and the existence of that accountability is precisely the point.

It is also worth being clear about the nature of the agents whose conduct has generated this legislation. These are not fully trained, community-equipped law enforcement professionals. Training periods for ICE agents have been dramatically shortened in recent years - in some cases to just weeks. They are not adequately prepared for de-escalation, community interaction, or the complexity of operating in diverse American communities. When they cause harm under those conditions and there is no meaningful avenue for recourse, that is not a functioning legal system. That is impunity.

A Vote Against This Bill Is a Vote for Exceptions to the Rule of Law

I want to be direct with this committee about what is at stake in this vote. Declining to pass SB26-005 sends a message to Colorado communities, to injured residents with no recourse, and to federal agents operating in this state that there are exceptions to legal accountability. That people in certain uniforms, carrying certain badges, can be violent and break the law without consequence. Nine states are saying that is not acceptable. Illinois has already acted. Maine and California have laws already on the books. Colorado has the chance to lead.

The rule of law is not a selective principle. It applies to everyone or it applies to no one. SB26-005 is a modest, targeted, and constitutionally grounded effort to ensure it applies to everyone in this state. I urge this committee to pass it.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Ramsey

Colorado Springs, Colorado



Hello,

I am Kaisa Simon, Health Equity Advocate, writing on behalf of my organization, Tri-County Health Network, a community health equity non-profit serving Western Colorado committed to collaborating with our communities to improve health for everyone. We strongly believe in the urgent need for this legislation and support the bill SB 26-005, Rights Violation in Immigration Enforcement Remedy. We urge you to pass this bill to strengthen public safety and community trust, make justice accessible, and restore dignity and fairness to all.

According to a 2025 Pulse data collected by the Colorado Health Foundation, government and politics were cited as the top concern facing Coloradans. In our communities in Western Colorado, we have seen the harmful impacts of the pervasive fear of immigration enforcement. People are too afraid to leave their homes, so children are missing school, families are missing medical appointments, and people are not showing up to court because they're being detained after leaving the courthouse.

In Montrose County alone, there have been a number of cases of ICE officers detaining community members after leaving court. Even to the point of ICE agents chasing mistaken vehicles, creating dangerous and unnecessarily hostile conditions on our roads. This not only affects the immigrant community, but also has structural health and safety impacts on our whole community. This leads to an increase in costs and risks on our already strained medical system and local law enforcement system. When constitutional abuse goes unchecked, it breeds fear, discourages cooperation with law enforcement, and undermines public safety for all. This bill provides a channel for redress, which in turn incentivizes lawful conduct by all enforcement personnel and rebuilds community trust.

On March 17, 2026, in the process of leaving court, a Montrose man was detained from the vehicle of his lawyer by ICE. The lawyer asked for a warrant and was provided only with an administrative ICE detainer. This was an illegal stop under Colorado Law (SB 25-276), and it infringed on this man's Fourth Amendment Constitutional rights. The Constitution

promises every person in America certain basic rights, like freedom from unreasonable searches or cruel treatment. If federal immigration agents violate those rights in Colorado, there's often no real path to hold them accountable. Recent Supreme Court decisions (*Egbert v. Boule*, 2022; *Martin v. U.S.*, 2025) have narrowed federal avenues for constitutional claims against federal officers, leaving victims without meaningful remedy. This bill makes the Constitution's promise real for our community.

In October 2025, our community in Montrose witnessed a deeply troubling incident in which a mother and her son were beaten by local police and ICE. They had come to court seeking resolution in a non-immigration related issue, as victims. Upon leaving the courthouse, they were followed by ICE and targeted because of the color of their skin. Without warning and a judicial warrant, they were stopped by an intersection, taken out of their car, pushed down to the ground and beaten by ICE with the Montrose police present. When they asked police for help, they were not protected: those same officers were involved in the beating. The family was later deported, and from abroad they sent us photos of bloodstained shirts and severe bruising. The harm extended beyond them: members of our community, both immigrant and U.S. citizens, were afraid to share the videos and testimonies they had, out of fear of retaliation. This moment shook community trust and underscores the urgent need for protections so that all people can access our courts and public institutions without fear. This bill steps in where federal courts have stepped back, ensuring Colorado residents can seek justice in state court for violations of their federally protected constitutional rights during immigration enforcement.

This bill does not challenge lawful enforcement or create liability for mere policy disagreements. It specifically excludes Colorado peace officers acting within state law, ensuring no conflict with local law enforcement cooperation. Additionally, it mandates attorney fees and costs for prevailing plaintiffs (Section 2(2)), removing a major financial barrier for low-income immigrants. This "fee-shifting" provision is essential for attracting competent counsel and ensuring a level playing field against well-resourced defendants.



The U.S. is a nation of values, founded on the ideal that all are created equal. Any order that violates a person's right to due process and equal treatment violates our Constitution and cannot stand. Everyone means everyone, no exception. This is why you must pass SB26-005.

Thank you,

Tri-County Health Network

Kaisa Simon,

Health Equity Advocate Constitution



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Tri-County Health Network is a nonprofit organization committed to collaborating with our communities to improve healthcare for everyone