

TO: Senator Anne Carney - Chair, Representative Amy Kuhn - Chair and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Faith Barnes, LCSW

DATE: May 15, 2025

RE: LD 1259 An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement

My name is Faith Barnes, and I live in Brunswick. I am moved to add my voice to those opposing passage of LD 1259 An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement based both on my Unitarian Universalist faith and my experience working with immigrants and seeing their positive influence on our community.

Like many other faith traditions, mine calls me to work for a diverse multicultural beloved community where all feel welcome and can thrive, and where every person is recognized and treated as inherently worthy, having the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion, wherever their origin and whatever their immigration status.

I am a volunteer with Mid Coast New Mainers Group and have seen first hand how hard members of the immigrant community work to make their lives and our community a better place to live. I volunteer as a Job Coach. Once my new Mainer received her work papers, I assisted her with her job application and interview. She was hired and works incredibly hard. Her employer has shared with me how much they appreciate her and the hard work she does for them. She is a motivated young woman.

This young woman and others with whom I have worked came to the United States to find a better life. They left behind repressive regimes and risked their lives to reach this country. This bill will not make our community safer. I urge you to do the right thing and to oppose this bill, which sets out to formalize the relationship between my local police department and ICE to the detriment of our community and new community members.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Faith Barnes, LCSW