

Penny Harmon
Edgecomb
LD 1971

Penny Harmon
Edgecomb, Maine

Subject: Opposition to LD 1971 – An Act to Protect Workers in This State by Clarifying the Relationship of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies with Federal Immigration Authorities

I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 1971. As a 58-year-old lifelong Maine resident, I have witnessed our state evolve from a community where children could freely ride bicycles, visit friends, and trick-or-treat unsupervised to one where public safety is increasingly compromised.

Background and Personal Perspective

I grew up in a Maine where community bonds and neighborly trust ensured that children enjoyed the freedom of our streets. Today, the changes we face make it difficult to recapture that sense of security. My perspective is informed not only by nostalgia for a safer past but also by a deep concern for the present and future safety of our communities.

Key Concerns

1. Public Safety and Law Enforcement Cooperation: I believe that allowing our local law enforcement to fully collaborate with federal immigration authorities is critical. Without this cooperation, it becomes increasingly challenging to identify and remove individuals who may have entered the state through unauthorized channels and who, in some instances, have been associated with criminal behavior.

2. Impact on Neighborhoods and Families: While many immigrants come to Maine with the intention of a fresh start and contribute positively to our communities, I am deeply worried that allowing undocumented individuals to remain may affect the safety of our neighborhoods. I ask:

- o Do you feel comfortable knowing that potentially dangerous individuals, including pedophiles, might be living near your children?

- o Is it acceptable for those who entered our country outside of legal channels to live and move freely within our towns?

- o How can we ensure a secure environment for our families if local law enforcement is hindered in its work with immigration officials?

- o

3. The Need for a Clear and Practical Approach: It is crucial that Maine's legislation distinguishes between documented, law-abiding immigrants and those who have entered our state illegally. Strengthening our public safety measures should focus on supporting law enforcement agencies in working with federal immigration authorities to address any threats to our community.

Conclusion

Maine citizens deserve a state where they, their children, and grandchildren can feel secure. By allowing law enforcement to collaborate fully with immigration officers, we can help ensure that safety is maintained for all residents. I respectfully urge you to vote against LD 1971 if it restricts this necessary partnership.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I hope my perspective, rooted in both personal experience and a commitment to the safety of our communities, will be taken into account.