

Carol Horne
Appleton
LD 1971

To the Chairs of the Committee on the Judiciary and Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to support 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. My reasons for supporting this bill are for concerns over our rights, and also what I believe to be common sense and good judgement.

I believe strongly that we should not expand the work and the mission of our local public safety personnel to include work that is defined by ICE, Homeland Security or Customs and Border Patrol. My understanding is that public safety resources are already stretched in our communities, providing the work that they have traditionally been providing without adding more responsibilities to their tasks.

In addition, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), ICE and the office of Customs and Border Patrol are federal agencies responsible for many of the arrests, abductions and deportations that is generating terror among immigrant communities throughout Maine and the US. Local Law enforcement partnering with these agencies will only serve to generate fear of all law enforcement for all immigrants in our communities. This will become a barrier for persons to access the help that they need for medical emergencies and safety. As a state that is reliant on immigrants and migrant persons for much of the work that is done in the service industry, construction, landscaping and farming, we as a state can not afford to alienate these workers that provide vital services to our community.

More and more frequently we are hearing stories of people that are in Maine and in the US legally studying and working for us in our communities being arrested, detained and deported without due process. These incidents have been frighteningly close to my home in Appleton. A recent arrest in Waldo County is a perfect example of this. Due process and equal protection under our US Constitution apply to everyone in the United States, regardless of immigration status. I fear that if we do not honor the rights of all citizens, that soon these rights will be destroyed and we will begin to live in a state of fear rather than freedom in our communities.