

Stephen Benson
Surry
LD 1259

“Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Stephen Benson. I live in Surry, and I am here to testify in favor of LD 1259.

I am a retired psychologist living year-round in Maine. I urge you to relax the growing fear among our state's citizens who become alarmed and deeply worried to hear news about our policing systems being subordinated to ICE and the President's commands and xenophobic ideology. LD 1259 will help reduce terror and hardship among Mainers generally, while it also helps innocent, law-abiding migrant workers and immigrants to adjust to our state's economy and employment standards. Our concerns include the children of adults who may be detained or deported by ICE due to our police's compliance with ICE practices, which often are not within existing law.

Maine law enforcement hasn't trained in the complex and changing area of immigration law, and doesn't have the capacity to add Federal law enforcement into their job description. Our police are stretched thin dealing with Mainers' actual needs, and we should not distract and confuse police by adding new duties with respect to immigration authority.

For these and other reasons, I urge you to vote in favor of LD 1259. Thank you for your time, I'm happy to answer any questions that you have.”