

May 18, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Erika Arthur and I am a resident of Freedom, Maine. I am writing today to express my support for 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.

Immigrants in Maine make enormous contributions to our communities. Their presence is truly priceless. The wellbeing of immigrants is inextricably tied to the wellbeing of the entire state, whether measured through economics, labor, culture, public health, or public safety.

Critically, the Constitution protects due process and equal protection under the law for all people, regardless of their immigration status. Local, County, and State law enforcement collaboration with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a threat to our communities as it has been shown to create a climate of fear for immigrants, empower officers to enforce unconstitutional policies, and add burdens to agencies that are already beyond capacity.

Law-abiding residents of Maine and other states, some of them refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing violence in their home countries, have already been targeted by local, county, and state law enforcement officers who have been deputized to implement federal policy. These actions have caused enormous suffering to these families and have required many resources to carry out, especially when residents' constitutional rights have been violated in the process.

I know I am not alone in the fact that I would rather our state's resources go toward measures that truly keep all residents safe than toward targeting our neighbors who are simply trying to get to work and support their families and communities. This bill will prevent an unnecessary drain on resources and help protect the rights of immigrants here in Maine. I urge you to support LD 1971.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erika Arthur', with a stylized, cursive script.

Erika Arthur